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MEMOIR

OF

JOHN SHARP,

Late Superintendent of Croydon School.

"The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."—PROV. iv. 18.

"Therefore be ye also ready; for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of Man cometh."—MATT. xxiv. 44.

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PREFACE.

The present work may appear to some an uncalled-for addition to the already numerous class of religious biographies. It has been thought, however, that there are many who had the privilege of an acquaintance with the subject of this Memoir,—more especially those who received their education and training under him at Croydon,—who would gladly become acquainted with the more private character of one whom they so justly esteemed and loved. And, although there were not many striking incidents in his life to interest the more general reader, it can, perhaps, hardly be, that such a course can be carefully and seriously traced, without additional evidence being afforded of the loving kindness and faithfulness of the Lord; while a little stimulus may be given to use all diligence to make our calling and election sure, knowing that time is swiftly passing, and the day rapidly hastening, when

unclothed of mortality, we also must enter upon the great realities of an unseen and eternal world. May that momentous period, through sanctification of the Spirit, and a living faith in the all-atoning efficacy of a Saviour's blood, be to all who read these lines a time of joy and not of grief; a time of the realization of all our most glorious anticipations, when, through adorable mercy, an entrance shall be abundantly administered into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

S. H.

DARLINGTON,
Fifth Month, 1857.

PPiU

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A MEMOIR, &c.

CHAPTER I.

1812—1833. ÆT. 1—21.

JOHN SHARP'S EARLY LIFE AND EDUCATION—ACCOUNT OF THE FRIENDS SCHOOL AND WORKHOUSE AT CLERKENWELL—ITS REMOVAL TO ISLINGTON, AND AFTERWARDS TO CROYDON—JOHN SHARP'S APPRENTICESHIP—EXTRACTS FROM HIS JOURNAL.

JOHN SHARP, the subject of the present memoir, was born at Brighton, on the 4th of the Second Month, 1812.

But little record has been preserved of his earlier years; they appear to have been marked by no very striking occurrences; but the general recollections of that period by his surviving relatives are of a pleasing character. While in very early life, his mind appears to have been susceptible of the heart-softening impressions of Divine love; his childhood in this respect being, to a considerable extent, an earnest of the future man.

He paid a visit while very young to an aunt then living at Bermondsey; who still survives at the advanced age of eighty-six, and who remembers his childish days with lively and tender interest. When about three

years old he never went to sleep without repeating the simple lines of Watts, so appropriate for children :—

"I lay my body down to sleep ;
Let angels guard my head,
And through the hours of darkness keep
Their watch around my bed.

With cheerful heart I close my eyes,
Since Thou wilt not remove :
And in the morning let me rise
Rejoicing in thy love."

On the occasion of his last visit to this aged relative, in 1852, he repeated these lines, observing that he had never forgotten them.

At the age of six or seven he was accustomed frequently to retire to the summer-house for the purpose of privately perusing his Bible, or of committing hymns to memory ; on these occasions neither needing nor wishing for company.

When about fourteen or fifteen his aunt remembers his repeating the lines of Newton :—

"'Tis a point I long to know,
Oft it causes anxious thought,
Do I love the Lord or no ?
Am I his, or am I not ?"

adding, "This is what we must all come to know."

In the year 1821 he was placed at Friends' School in the Islington Road, London, the establishment which was afterwards removed to Croydon. As from this period to the close of his life he was intimately connected with this Institution, it may not be unfitting to give a short sketch of its origin and history.

Among the subjects which, in the early period of the Society, claimed the close attention of the enlarged mind of George Fox, as of vital interest to the well-being of the body, were the care of the poor and the education of youth. The persecutions to which our first members were exposed, the spoiling of their goods, the forfeiture of their estates, and other penalties, could not fail to reduce many to comparative destitution; and one great object of the first establishment of our meetings for discipline was, that all the needful requirements of such sufferers might be supplied. George Fox was the zealous instrument of establishing these meetings throughout the country; thus forming a regular organization for carrying out his religious and philanthropic views, so entirely in accordance with the precepts and practices of the early Christians. With regard to education, his views were briefly and forcibly expressed in the wish that Friends' children should be instructed in "all things civil and useful in the creation."

The records of the Society show, not only that several schools for the education of Friends' children were established, but also that the general subject claimed the serious attention of the Yearly Meeting and the Meeting for Sufferings. In the year 1697, a document was issued by the latter meeting, recommending, among other considerations, attention to a scheme which had been put forth the previous year by a Friend named John Bellars, and which proposed, by the establishment of a "College of Industry," the accomplishment of the "better maintenance of the poor and the education of children." According to the sanguine hopes of the

propounder of this scheme, it was to include "all useful trades and industry, with profit for the rich, a plentiful living for the poor, and a good education for youth." It appears to have received considerable attention both in London and Bristol.* The London Quarterly Meeting in 1699, in consequence of a report from some Friends appointed to consider John Bellars' scheme, directed its Monthly Meetings to make inquiries, as to the number of aged people and children who would be eligible for such care as the proposed plan suggested. The result was that there were in London and the neighbourhood "184 aged people, most of them capable of some work, and 47 children, or more, most of them fit to put to some kind of business." It was thus evident that the materials were not wanting, if the plan were only a feasible and desirable one. So much interest was felt, that an address setting forth the urgency of the case was issued by the Quarterly Meeting. The desirableness of an establishment where the wants of these objects of care might be provided for, was dwelt upon; it being proposed that both classes should contribute to the support of the Institution by manual labour, while some amount of education was to be given to the children. A subscription of £2000 was recommended; and, though it is probable this was felt

* In Bristol an organized experiment was made in connexion with this plan. Charles Marshall, who practised medicine in this city, and in his later years lived in London, appears to have given the subject his very close attention. In his last illness he strongly recommended the claims of the poor on the consideration of Friends, and the desirableness of providing them with regular employment.—(*See Piety Promoted*, part ii. p. 217. Ed. 1812.)

at the time to be a considerable effort, the sum of £1888 was raised. Thirty Friends were nominated as a Committee; they were desired to engage suitable premises, prepare them for the reception of the inmates, and then to endeavour to carry out the objects the Quarterly Meeting had in view. A house was eventually taken in Clerkenwell, fitted up for the purpose, and opened in the year 1702. Such was the origin of the "Friends' School and Workhouse at Clerkenwell." Considerable disappointment was felt that at first only thirty-two poor Friends availed themselves of the offered asylum. Probably some might be apprehensive of the irksomeness of those restraints, which, in every well regulated institution of this nature, must be imposed on individuals, for the benefit and proper conduct of the whole; while to others, the idea of entering what they might consider a pauper establishment may have been somewhat repulsive. It appears, however, that those who did enter, very generally appreciated the benevolent intentions of the founders, and the records state that they were contented and thankful.

Boys were received into the Institution in 1703, and girls in 1704. In accordance with the proposed plan, labour of a suitable kind was provided for them, principally consisting of weaving for the boys, and spinning and knitting for the girls. The children were admitted at the early age of seven; they rose at five in the summer and six in the winter; and only two hours in the day were allowed for the boys' instruction in reading and writing. The number of children of both sexes was probably about forty. The practice of collecting

the family daily for the reading of the Scriptures was early adopted; and in 1704 it was concluded to hold a meeting for worship on the premises on First-day mornings and Fifth-days, Friends in the neighbourhood being encouraged occasionally to attend; and we have records of this meeting being generally visited by those travelling in the ministry.

It appears that the Monthly Meetings paid with each aged person who was admitted, three shillings per week, and with each child, one shilling per week; the latter were also to be provided with clothing, and a fee of forty shillings paid on their admission. The aged inmates were to bring what furniture they possessed, and their working tools; and Monthly Meetings were particularly requested to induce those to enter who still had some ability for labour, further encouragement to such being given by an offer of admission on lower terms. They were employed in the kind of labour to which they had been most accustomed previously, and some curious accounts of these occupations may be gathered from the old records. Among other engagements are enumerated, "opening and cutting *jump*" (probably *junk*); "picking oakum; spinning thread and silk; spinning and carding cotton; sewing; knitting; washing and getting up of clothes; shoemaking; and the care of '*public Friends*'' horses, there being stabling and even grass convenient." Scarcely any that were admitted were under sixty years of age, and some were upwards of eighty. Their earnings were very small; the *profits* on each person's labour only averaging three-eighths of a penny per day; the children are said

to have earned about one shilling each per week. In the year 1712 so much disappointment was felt at these results, that a committee was appointed, John Bellars being one of the number, to consider whether a more systematic manufactory of some kind could not be introduced into the school. They decided in the negative; and stated in their report, "that considering the circumstances of the aged and of the children, it must rather be accounted an hospital and nursery, than a workhouse." As the Institution was not paying its expenses, another subscription was raised, the principal part of the proceeds being invested, in order to ensure some reliable source of regular income. It appears, however, that what was subscribed on this occasion, with the annual receipts from the inmates and from other sources, sufficed for the needs of the Institution till the year 1754; in the mean time the interest of Friends in the undertaking never appeared to lessen.

The experiment of rendering the establishment partly self-sustaining by the proceeds of the labour of its inmates seems only gradually to have given way, advancing light on the subject of education making comparatively slow progress, but leading to the adoption of the system, in 1768, of dividing the time pretty equally between work and learning. The girls too, who had been indebted to the schoolmaster for what small amount of literary instruction they received, were provided with a governess, who, in addition to this department, was to superintend their needlework. This latter art was, however, taught cautiously, as it was considered to unfit for domestic labour, and a fear was

entertained that it might be chosen as "*maintenance*;" but useful plain work was at all times encouraged.

So long as the establishment remained at Clerkenwell, but little change took place in its character, except, as already intimated, a gradual relaxation in the amount of labour required from the children, and an increased attention to their literary instruction. The foundation of Ackworth School in the year 1779, was the consequence of a greatly enlarged interest, on the part of the Society generally, in the subject of education. This feeling doubtless had its effect on the management and conduct of the Institution of which we are reviewing the history. In the year 1786 it was found advisable to remove it from Clerkenwell to Islington Road, an eligible property being offered in that locality, which was prepared for its prospective service by the outlay of between four and five thousand pounds. In the first instance, the attempt was made to separate the aged people by removing them to Plaistow; so that the Institution for a time assumed exclusively the character of a school. It was found, however, that considerable extra expense was thus entailed; and as there was space on the Islington Road estate for an erection suited to them, they returned to the establishment, the premises at Plaistow being advantageously disposed of. The system of employment continued gradually to diminish, though traces of it may be found up to the year 1794: the increased introduction of machinery no doubt in part contributed to this result, as the profits arising must in consequence have been seriously affected. Ackworth, too, had now been established some fifteen

years; manual labour formed no part of its economy; and its lower terms of eight and ten guineas per annum naturally influenced even the London meetings in its favour, with respect to the children for whose education they were chargeable; the cost to the Institution at Islington Road being necessarily greater. The same motives must have operated on the comparatively few parents who bore the expense themselves. The effect was that while, some years afterwards, the list for admission into Ackworth was overflowing, as many as 147 being candidates at one time, the numbers at Islington Road continued to dwindle and fall, until, in the year 1809, the state of the school claimed the earnest consideration of the Quarterly Meeting, with a view to increasing its efficiency. The subject was referred to the deliberations of a committee of the Quarterly Meeting, which ended in the proposal of a plan, calculated, in their view, at once to ease the pressure of applications for Ackworth, and to restore the Islington Road establishment to the more extended usefulness of which, by its size and situation, it was considered capable. In the year 1811, an address, drawn up with considerable talent, by Joseph Foster and John Eliot, Jun. (two members of the committee), was adopted and widely circulated. This address stated that it was now intended entirely to give up one object originally contemplated, viz., the support of aged persons, and to confine the scope of the establishment to the maintenance and education of children. Alluding to the small number of the latter, now reduced to less than thirty, and to the disadvantages

arising from children having to wait so long for admission into Ackworth, when there was room in this establishment for at least 100, the offer was made to the neighbouring Quarterly Meetings to receive children from their limits, on their agreeing to subscribe annually to the funds of the school. These admissions were to be at the same charge (ten guineas) as those from London and Middlesex; but not so as to deprive these (the original objects for whom the school was founded), of the benefits which it held out to them. This offer was eventually accepted by nine Quarterly Meetings; the school was opened under the new auspices on the 1st of the Seventh Month, 1811, with the designation of "Friends' School, under the care of the Quarterly Meeting of London and Middlesex;" the numbers increased to about 100, and the new arrangement appeared to work beneficially. At the Yearly Meeting of this year, Henry Tuke drew the attention of Friends to this movement; two sittings were occupied in an interesting manner in the discussion of its regularity, some fears being entertained of its operating against the interests of Ackworth; but a harmonious feeling prevailed, and probably the benefit of both institutions was promoted.

In the lapse of time, owing to the great increase of buildings in what were then the suburbs of London, and the evident certainty of the whole district around the school being absorbed as a portion of the great city, considerations of health, and other motives, pointed to the desirableness of a second removal. For a time Hitchin was thought of as an eligible locality;

but eventually, in 1823, some premises at Croydon were approved and secured. While the preparations for this removal were proceeding, a final arrangement was made with the London meetings, as to their claims on a portion of the funded property of the Institution, for the support of their infirm and aged poor. Provision was also made for the proper application of certain funds which had been placed at the disposal of the Committee of Management, for bestowing apprentice-fees, marriage-portions, gratuities at the expiration of apprenticeship, and for young women engaged in household service. In the meantime, a liberal subscription towards the expense of fitting the new premises for the reception of the family was proceeding; it amounted ultimately to upwards of £11,000; the entire cost of the new erections and furniture was thus defrayed, and the establishment was removed to Croydon in the Eleventh Month, 1825. Under the superintendence of Henry and Edith Dymond, many improvements on the system pursued at Islington were introduced; the numbers were increased to 120, and subsequently to 150; and the appointment of Edward Foster Brady to the headmastership was also of great advantage in the conduct of the boys' department. This arrangement continued till the year 1834, when, on the resignation of the superintendents, Edward F. Brady and his wife were appointed to that office, John Sharp, as will appear in the course of this memoir, taking the post of head teacher. It is very interesting to those who can trace the whole history of the establishment for the last

thirty years, to realize the fact of the various improvements which one after another have been effected.

The great extension of the Scriptural instruction given to the children; the endeavour to rule by love rather than by fear; the increased attention to their comfort in various little household arrangements; the desire to regulate and direct profitably the employment of leisure hours; the introduction of improved methods of tuition, and many other points, might be named as striking evidences of the advance which has been made.

The lamented decease of Edward Foster Brady in 1838, and the resignation of his wife, who continued the superintendency till 1842, led in the latter year to the appointment of John Sharp to this important post, as will be observed on the further perusal of this memoir.*

John Sharp's conduct while at school evidenced the possession of sterling worth, and a preference for things that are excellent and of good report. His schoolfellows have a very agreeable and affectionate remembrance of his amiable disposition, orderly habits, and anxiety to do what was right. These qualities, combined with a steady perseverance in the acquisition of knowledge, led his teachers to place great confidence in him, appointing him to little positions of trust, and eventually induced the proposal for his remaining in the Institution as an apprentice, on the expiration of his time as

* For the particulars of this sketch, the compiler has been much indebted to the writer of the "Five Papers on the past experience of the Society on Education," published by "Friends' Educational Society;" also to a paper on the early history of the School drawn up by a Friend in the neighbourhood of London.

a scholar. This arrangement was in accordance with his own feelings, and he entered on his new and important duties on the 6th of the Tenth Month, 1825, just before the removal of the school from Islington to Croydon. At the time of which we are speaking, there was not in our public schools that provision for assisting and encouraging the apprentices in their studies, which of later years has proved so highly beneficial, and has led to such satisfactory results. In those days the apprentice went straight from his position as a scholar to undertake the tuition of the lowest class; there was no intermediate opportunity for pursuing his studies uninterruptedly, and the duties of his post were such as to leave him comparatively little leisure for the further pursuit of knowledge. It depended, therefore, upon the manner in which that leisure was employed, and upon the systematic arrangement of his course of study, whether he was making that continual addition to his stock of knowledge, more especially on subjects not professedly taught in the school, which would have so decided an influence in fitting him for his future career, when the tuition of the elder boys might devolve upon him. Notwithstanding the disadvantages of his position, John Sharp was most assiduous in the pursuit of knowledge; and by early rising, and a careful distribution of his leisure moments, was very successful in attaining a stock of useful information, which proved invaluable to him in after life.

But it was not in this way alone that he was preparing for his future career of more extended usefulness. It is evident that, especially in the important and

responsible post he was now filling, it is not sufficient that the teacher possess great natural powers for acquiring and imparting outward knowledge. There must be beyond this the awakened mind, the renewed heart, a sense of the deceitfulness of sin, an anxious desire to become free from its thraldom; love to God, in a thankful appreciation of his great love as shown in the gift of his dear Son; love to the blessed Saviour, evincing its constraining influence in the earnest desire to live unto him who died for us and rose again; and a constant recognition of the workings of that Holy Spirit purchased for us by him, which, helping our many infirmities, and teaching what to pray for and how to pray, enables the Christian teacher to flee to frequent prayer as to his strong refuge; and encourages him to come boldly to the throne of grace, that he may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in every time of need. There is reason to believe that the subject of this memoir was, to a considerable extent, at this early period of his life, alive to these feelings, and animated by these desires. Conscious that his own unassisted efforts would be utterly futile in the right fulfilment of his important duties, he cherished anxious desires to be rightly directed in the use of the means at his disposal, and sought by the careful and diligent reading and study of the sacred volume, by retirement and serious thoughtfulness before the Lord, and we may believe by fervent prayers for the heavenly blessing upon his labours, to be enabled to walk circumspectly before his charge; and while engaged in imparting outward instruction, he gave evidence that higher and holier thoughts often claimed

his attention, and that his desire was to lead those under him to become scholars with him in the school of Christ.

But his own private memoranda will more fully show the state of his religious feelings at the period alluded to. Under date of 4th of Tenth Month, 1829, he says :—

"Began the day with secret prayer to the Lord for assistance in the discharge of my duty, which He has been graciously pleased to grant. O for the continued aid of the Holy Spirit to enable me to walk in the narrow way that leads to life and everlasting happiness.

"*First Month* 10*th*, 1830.—May I be more and more concerned to wait daily, and oftener than the day, for a renewal of strength; for without divine assistance my endeavour to discharge my very important duty aright will be unavailing.

"*First Month* 16*th*, Seventh-day evening.—Upon looking back on my thoughts, words and actions, for some time past, I feel the necessity of an increased watchfulness, lest I may by any means prove a stumbling-block in the way of any of those who are placed under my care; and also of a more frequent waiting on the Lord for assistance to perform my responsible duty aright."

These extracts from memoranda, penned probably in the calm of the evening, after the close of the labours of the day, bear evidence that there was at least the willing mind, the anxious desire for heavenly direction and help; and although the weakness of the flesh was often experienced, and frequent cause to mourn over shortcomings and unfaithfulness, we cannot but believe that these serious feelings were blessed to

himself and those around him, leading on his part to great circumspection of conduct, and not without its result in the healthy moral atmosphere diffused around by his conscientious efforts to do right.

The return of the anniversary of one's birth, and the opening of a new year, are periods that are often devoted by the thoughtful and serious mind to profitable reflection. They may, perhaps, be regarded as elevations in the traveller's course, on attaining which he may rest for a few moments on his journey, look back on the path he has trodden, mark his mis-steppings and his errors, and review the mercies of the way; and while the retrospect may afford cause of warning and thankfulness, strength may be sought and granted to encounter the difficulties or the trials which may be permitted in the unknown course before him. Some of the extracts which follow were penned on occasions of this nature.

"*Second Month 4th*, 1830.—This being the anniversary of my birthday, I have felt inclined to look back on former years; and on considering how small a proportion of the eighteen years which have elapsed since my entrance into this state of probation have been devoted to the service of my God, desires have arisen in my mind that I may press forward with increased ardour; and in a state of child-like simplicity, place my dependence on Him who is 'mighty to save, and able to deliver,' without whose assistance all my endeavours to resist the attacks of the unwearied enemy will be unavailing.

"*Fourth Month 25th*.—My mind has been concerned during this day under a fear lest I should be found going

backward instead of forward in the way to Zion; and desires have afresh arisen that I may be found obedient to my divine Master in all his requirings. May I be encouraged to look more and more unto him for help, who is able and willing to assist all who give themselves up to follow him whithersoever he may think fit, in his infinite wisdom, to lead them.

"*Fifth Month* 16*th*.—This day have earnest desires for preservation been renewed in my mind, accompanied, however, by the painful reflection, that there is still much within me that must be subjected and brought into obedience to the will of my divine Master.

"May I be more and more concerned to attend to the dictates of the inward monitor, and to the reproofs of instruction, which lead to life and everlasting happiness.

"*First Month* 1*st*, 1831.—Having entered upon a new year, desires have arisen afresh that I may be found travelling in the road to Zion. Still am I left as it were to myself; deprived of the sensible enjoyment of the divine presence; perhaps to prove my faith and obedience to my Heavenly Father. Oh that nothing may be permitted to draw my mind from endeavouring to follow him as far as ability is from time to time afforded!

"*Second Month* 4*th*.—The nineteenth anniversary of my birthday. Have I made any progress in my journey to the kingdom of heaven since last year? Alas! my transgressions have been many, and my inability to walk acceptably before the Judge of all the earth is very manifest; but, through the infinite mercy of the Most High, I trust I have been made in some degree sensible of my undone condition, and the necessity of seeking an interest in the Saviour's mediation, through whose merits I can alone attain to salvation, which, that I may more eagerly press

after, is my earnest desire. Discouragements will doubtless attend me; but, O my soul, put thy trust in him who is able to give thee the victory, and who, though he tarry long, will, I firmly believe, lift up the light of his glorious countenance upon me, and enable me to rejoice as on the banks of deliverance.

"*Second Month 4th*, 1832. — Through the unmerited goodness of the Almighty, I have attained the age of twenty years, and I trust I can acknowledge, with feelings of gratitude and deep humiliation, that 'Hitherto the Lord has helped me.'

"Although I have been long deprived of the sensible enjoyment of his presence in my heart, yet there have been seasons when I could look up to him with confidence, and I humbly trust I may yet be brought into a closer communion with my Maker. O may my life be entirely given up to his disposal.

Fifth Month 31st. To his sister.—"May it be the first desire of our hearts to yield obedience to divine requirings, and then, I trust, we shall experience hard things made easy and bitter things sweet; and whether a long or short time of probation be our portion, we shall be enabled to glorify the Lord in our conduct and conversation, however humble our walk in life may be; and eventually be admitted into the heavenly kingdom, and through unmerited, yet unbounded love and mercy, possess an inheritance among the saints in light.

"How earnestly have I desired, on my own account, as well as my beloved sister's, that our minds may be clothed with humility, and that we may endeavour, as much as in us lies, to acquiesce in the dispensations of an all-wise Providence:—they are indeed in many instances inscrutable, but we are bound to believe they are designed for our good.

Let us then, 'in all our ways, acknowledge him,' and I doubt not, 'he will direct our paths.'

"*Ninth Month* 1*st*, 1832.—On a review of my pilgrimage thus far, my heart overflows with gratitude to thee, O Lord, for the preservation thou hast been graciously pleased to extend, and I feel in some degree encouraged to supplicate a continuance of thy goodness. Enable me, O Lord, to walk in the narrow way, and yield a willing obedience to all thy requirings, however painful to flesh and blood. I feel as if I could at this time say, 'Let not thine eye pity nor thy hand spare [me] till thou hast made me *altogether* what thou wouldst have me to be.'

"*Second Month* 4*th*, 1833.—I have now spent twenty-one years in this state of probation;—how many yet remain are known to Thee, O Lord, alone.

"Thou hast hitherto, in adorable mercy, been pleased to help me. Thou hast from time to time made known to me, by thy unflattering witness in my heart, what thou wouldst have me do, and what to leave undone. My shortcomings have indeed been many and great; but still thou hast been mercifully disposed towards me, and I believe that, unworthy as I am, thou art still looking down upon me with an eye of compassion and love.

"O Lord God! under a deep and humbling sense of my unworthiness and of thy unbounded goodness, I desire to feel thankful to thee for all thy past mercies, and to supplicate that thou wilt continue thy loving-kindness to thy poor dependent creature. If it be thy will to make use of so unworthy an instrument in any way for the furtherance of thy glorious kingdom upon the earth, be thou pleased to bestow upon me ability to serve thee faithfully, and to endure with resignation the fiery baptisms I may have to pass through—the refining operations of thy holy hand.

"O Lord I am sensible that of myself I can do nothing; —that it is only as thou art pleased to enable me, that I can do any good thing;—but if thou, in thy matchless mercy, wilt still condescend to be with me, and support me, I will be thine. If thou wilt graciously afford me strength according to my day, I will fulfil all thy requirings.

"Thus, O Lord, do I solemnly enter into covenant with thee, under the conviction that thy power alone can enable me to walk acceptably before thee."

These last pious effusions were penned, it will be observed, on the attainment of his majority, and at the close of his apprenticeship. His career during that period had been such as to gain for him the esteem and love of those with whom he was connected. One observable point in his character was the steady and persevering, yet quiet way, in which he endeavoured to surmount the peculiar difficulties which the situation he filled imposed on such a disposition as his. Naturally gentle and retiring, the atmosphere of a school was one which in many respects might have been thought uncongenial and unsuitable. It was remarkable, nevertheless, to observe, how, by constant persevering effort, he set himself to overcome the obstacles which beset his path, still in so quiet and unobtrusive a manner, and so much in what might justly be called "the meekness of wisdom," that it was evident to those around him he was not unmindful of the promise, "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." The consequence was, that

though he had to pass through some trials and discouragements in connexion with his responsible office during his apprenticeship, he had, at the period at which we have arrived, succeeded in obtaining, not only the approbation of those on whom devolved the more immediate management of the school, but also to a great extent the high esteem and love of many of the children. In conducting the literary instruction of his pupils his talent was very considerable; he had the happy art of keeping up the interest of his class, and of communicating knowledge in a pleasing manner suited to the capacity of the scholars. In short, at this period the committee and superintendents were so well satisfied with his qualifications, that they gladly availed themselves of his continued services after the expiration of his apprenticeship.

It may be that some who were acquainted with this dear friend, and others, on perusing the foregoing chapter, may be ready to suppose his disposition to have been naturally so good, that he knew comparatively nothing of the temptations and difficulties which have beset and still surround them, and that therefore they can never realise such an experience as his. It should be remembered, however, that every disposition has its peculiar temptations, and that our unwearied adversary is ever ready to adapt his baits to suit our individual inclinations or weaknesses. We may generally be assured, when we meet with cases of this kind, in the first place that we cannot possibly know all the secret exercises and temptations which are the lot of these apparently favoured individuals; and, in the next place, that

in so far as they walk circumspectly and in the fear of God, it is only as they are humbly seeking for and receiving that help from above, which is freely offered for our acceptance also, and which comes from One mighty to save and able to deliver to the very uttermost. Could those of whose exemplary lives and happy deaths we so often hear and read, now address us, they would ascribe nothing to themselves or their natural dispositions; but all to the efficacy of that grace which came by Jesus Christ: even by him "who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."

CHAPTER II.

1833—1836. ÆT. 21—24.

EXTRACTS FROM JOURNAL—RESIGNATION OF SUPERINTENDENT—JOHN SHARP'S APPOINTMENT AS HEAD TEACHER—ILLNESS AND DEATH OF F. GREENWOOD, ONE OF THE SCHOLARS—J. J. GURNEY'S VISIT—DECEASE OF ANOTHER BOY.

We resume the extracts from John Sharp's private memoranda:—

"*Fourth Month 7th*, 1833.—My mind is this evening made sensible of great weakness and unworthiness; yet feels in some degree enabled to look for preservation to him who knoweth our frame, and remembereth that we are dust."

Sixth Month 16th, 1833.—After noticing the interment of a dear friend, he remarks:—

"In the meeting held afterwards, a sweet feeling of solemnity appeared to prevail. Our friend, J. F. M., alluded to the consistent walk of the departed during his tarriance on earth, and expressed his belief that his spirit has entered into the rest prepared for the righteous.

"*Seventh Month 10th*, 1833.—This morning, in meeting, our dear friend J. F. M. was concerned to stand up, though in great bodily weakness, and to press on his friends the watch-word, which, he said, had much rested with him, 'Be watchful; be faithful:' his communication was solemn and impressive. In the course of his testimony, he addressed some as being deprived of the presence of the Beloved of their

souls; to whom he recommended a state of patient waiting. He said, he believed some who heard him little knew what a day's work was before them; and advised them not to be anxiously concerned as to what they should do, or where they should go; but with child-like simplicity to wait their Lord's arrival, and on his appearance to watch, as it were, his countenance, and diligently perform his requirings. He stated his desire that none present should find themselves in the awful condition of a vessel marred upon the wheel—that all would occupy with the talent that every one had received; and he believed that ability would be granted for whatever might be required at our hands. The meeting was small; but a feeling of solemnity seemed to prevail; and I hope those present, and myself in particular, may be incited by this fresh call to watchfulness and faithfulness to the Lord's requirings."

Shortly after the entry last quoted, a considerable change took place in the management of the Institution by the resignation of the superintendent, and the appointment of Edward Foster Brady, then the principal master, to that office. At the same time, John Sharp undertook the post of head teacher; his duties and responsibilities being by this arrangement very materially increased. The situation was rendered the more arduous by the circumstance of Edward F. Brady's delicate state of health, which, though somewhat re-established at the time of his appointment, was often, during the four years and a half that he held the superintendency of the school, very seriously affected. A lingering spinal complaint very much prostrated him, and at last obliged his entire confinement night and day to

his couch.* Although, even when this was the case, he took a very lively interest in the welfare of the school, and attended to his duties to a greater extent than could easily have been supposed, it could not be but that some of these duties must fall upon those around him, and more especially upon the principal teacher. Under these circumstances, John Sharp's engagements were very close, and the entries in his journal for a time are much less frequent. Although in some respects a trying time, it may have been that the increased responsibility thus thrown upon him, bearing upon a mind anxious to perform its duties aright, was useful in the end in bringing out those capabilities and exercising those talents, which were afterwards so advantageously employed for the benefit of the Institution.

"*Fourth Month* 18*th*, 1834. To his sister.—I feel a strong desire that, as we increase in years, we may become more than ever united; united in the best sense of the word; even in seeking, through redeeming love, for ability to become followers of the best of masters, and lambs of that fold whose Shepherd never slumbers nor sleeps:—

"Blessed fold! no foe can enter,
And no friend departeth thence;
Jesus is their sun, their centre,
And their shield, Omnipotence."

Under date of 19th of Eleventh Month, 1834, he writes:—

"J. J. Gurney and his wife were engaged in visiting the various parts of this family. They sat with me alone. The interview was one which much affected me, and was not, I

* See Memoir of E. F. Brady, p. 102, &c.

hope, unattended with good. Previous to the visit I had much desired this might be the case; and I believe I may safely consider the feelings with which I was favoured, as a fresh token that the Almighty has not altogether cast me off.

"In the remembrance of thy goodness, O Lord, I desire to enter afresh into covenant with thee. Be pleased, O gracious God, to purify my soul; purge away the dross, the tin, and the reprobate silver; and when by a total reduction of self thou hast rendered me fit for thy service, make use of me as seems good in thy sight. Do with me as thou wilt; only 'cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me.'"

In a letter to his sister, under date of the 11th of Seventh Month, 1835, he remarks:—

"How delightful the thought that in those happy regions where dwell the spirits of the 'just made perfect,' our love will probably increase yet more and more, first to the great Fountain of light and love, and next to those who, like ourselves, are the objects of his never-ending mercy. While this is a pleasing theme for contemplation, and one which may serve as an encouragement to hold on our way, let us never forget the conditions on which alone an admission to this heavenly state will be granted. May we, my dear sister, be found among those, 'who, by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality,' remembering that it is only by a close attention to the manifestations of duty that our peace of mind can be secured. A few very simple lines, repeated to me some years ago by our late dear aunt Likeman, have often been instructive to me:—

"Mind that voice that speaks within,
Still reproving thee for sin;

Let thy mind attentive be
To its dictates constantly;
This the path to Heaven will show,
Which the wicked never know
Be attentive but to this
And thou wilt not do amiss."

In the autumn of 1835 one of those events occurred, so deeply touching to the heart of the religiously concerned teacher,—the removal by death of one of the children under his charge. Occupying for the time the place, and sustaining many of the duties and responsibilities of the parent, the teacher cannot but feel such visitations peculiarly trying, and calling for much deep searching of heart and close religious exercise. One of the boys, named Frederic Greenwood, was taken ill in the Tenth Month of this year; he was separated from his companions, and his complaint becoming rapidly worse, assumed the form of severe rheumatic fever. The simultaneous illness of both the superintendent and his wife rendered the trial still more acute. Notwithstanding the pressing duties of his post, John Sharp's sympathetic feelings drew him frequently to the bedside of the invalid: his soothing attentions and scripture readings were much appreciated.

In his journal, under date of Tenth Month 13th, John Sharp says:—

"I was called up at about five this morning to see F. Greenwood. On entering the room he immediately asked me to read to him, which I was about to do; but he became too restless to render the attempt desirable, and in a few minutes, after having become perfectly quiet, it was evident

his end was very near. He made signs for something to be applied to his lips, and a little wine was given him; very soon after which, his respiration having become gradually weaker, he ceased to breathe. The dear boy departed very quietly, and there is, we trust, reason to believe that with him all is well."

There are those who were inmates of the school at that time, who can remember the solemn feelings produced by this occurrence. The fact of one who so short a time previously had united in the sports of the playground, apparently in perfect health, being so suddenly summoned into the eternal world; the accounts which were given of his patience during his illness, and of his being enabled to say that he was not afraid to die; the solemn manner in which the whole circumstances were laid before the children that evening by a ministering Friend who attended the scripture reading, and John Sharp's earnest recommendation that great stillness should be observed in the chambers, and that all should endeavour to make the event the subject of profitable reflection, are circumstances yet in the remembrance of many; and the almost breathless silence which reigned after all had retired to rest, led to the hopeful trust, that, in many minds, deep and lasting serious impressions were then made.

The following extract will evince his earnest endeavours to make the most of his now very limited time for the purposes of self-improvement:—

"*Second Month 5th*, 1836.—On reviewing bygone years, considering my present position, and glancing as far as is

practicable into futurity, I see abundant cause for doubling my diligence, if I would attain to any proficiency as a literary character. My studies have in great measure been relinquished of late, owing to my increased duties: still I think more might have been accomplished by devoting less time to *sleep*. Being anxious to avoid this reflection in future, I am now about to record a resolution to rise earlier. This will serve as a witness against me if I do not put my intention in practice; and it is very probable that this will be the case, as I shall find it very difficult to overcome my propensity to self-indulgence in this respect. I intend, in future, to endeavour to rise at half-past five every morning, and to record on the fourth of every month how far my practice has accorded with my intention with regard to my studies. I think it will be well to have *one* study which shall claim a considerable portion of time, and the interval should be filled up by reading, writing, or some other pursuit tending more or less to the improvement of the mind.

"The following arrangement is one that strikes me at present as a desirable one with respect to the predominant studies:—

2nd Mo. 4th to 5th Mo. 4th, Mathematics
5th Mo. 4th to 8th Mo. 4th, French (and German perhaps)
8th Mo. 4th to 11th Mo. 4th, Latin
11th Mo. 4th to 2nd Mo. 4th, Greek.

"There should be a few remarks monthly, and a more copious report quarterly, as to how far this plan has been carried into effect."

The above is extracted from what is called the "personal journal," being a record of his progress in his studies, and other memoranda of a similar character. In future entries he notices the manner in which his resolutions were carried out—these are varied, as, either

by the concurrence of outward circumstances, or by what he was accustomed to consider as his own negligence, he was prevented from fully accomplishing his views.

"*Second Month* 12*th*.—Joseph John Gurney came and spent the day here; he gave the children a lecture in the morning on the 'book of nature,' and in the afternoon on the 'book of Scripture.' He interested them much in the morning by illustrating, by the doctrine of chances, the existence of a Great First Cause: the snowdrop was the flower with which he operated. He also conversed with them on the instinct which enables the bees to construct their cells on correct mathematical principles. His visit was very acceptable."

In a letter soon after this date, John Sharp describes this interesting visit more at length:—

"We had a very pleasant visit from our valued friend Joseph John Gurney. He came on purpose to spend a few hours with the children; his delight is to go into the playground, and call out 'Boys! Boys!' this he did on the present occasion, till he had all the school around him, when he stood still, and began to ask them a few questions; among others, he pointed to a flat stone, and queried of them into how many regular figures that stone could be divided without losing any of the space. Having answered three, the square, the right-angled triangle, and the regular hexagon, he remarked that the bees, in constructing their hives, had selected the form of the hexagon, the most convenient of the three for stowage, &c., and not only so, but that the little insect always makes exactly the same angle at the bottom of the cells, and that it has been ascertained

by Maclaurin, a clever mathematician, by a very difficult calculation, that this angle is precisely that which in every respect is best adapted to the purpose for which it is applied. Well then, he continued, do you suppose that the little bee is more clever and wiser than the most eminent mathematician that ever lived, or that he is led and directed by the Father and Fountain of Science? They answered, of course, the latter. He then called for a flower, and they brought him a snowdrop; on which he gave them an admirable lecture on natural theology, proving in a novel and interesting manner the existence of a Great First Cause. Beginning with the fibres of the root, he asked, 'Suppose it is ten chances to one that these fibres should be found in the ground where they were, and ten chances to one that the bulbous part should be found there, how many chances to one is it that they should both be found there, together?' They answered, twenty; he told them 'No—by the laws of chances they must multiply, not add;' then going on through the various parts of the flower, he clearly shewed that there were thousands of millions of chances to one that the snowdrop was not the effect of chance, but the work of a wise and powerful Designer.

"These lectures he gave to the boys and girls separately. In the afternoon he collected them together, and said, that as in the morning he had given them a lecture on the book of nature, he should now confine his attention to the book of Scripture. He then supposed a person of very intelligent mind (taking Socrates for an example) who had never seen or heard of the New Testament, and pointed out the wonder and delight such a person would experience as he read on, and examined for himself, the sublime and benevolent doctrines there unfolded; in doing which, he clearly showed the divine origin of the Christian religion.

"*Second Month* 28*th.*— ——, who has been indisposed a few days, became delirious this evening."

This is the first notice of the illness of one of the boys, which now began to raise the most serious apprehensions as to the issue of his malady. He was affected with that intense headach, and those soporific and stupefying sensations which indicate the approach of water on the brain. What rendered the case most intensely trying and affecting was the fact, that, to all outward appearance, there had not been that attention to the dictates of the heavenly monitor, that submission to the heart-tendering influences of redeeming love and mercy, which lead, even in a child, to an earnest desire to be found walking in the right way of the Lord. If ever there is a case in which the seriously minded teacher is led to consider whether he has performed his Christian duty to a beloved child committed to his trust, it is surely under such circumstances as these that the inquiry comes home with the greatest force. Nothing more, humanly speaking, can now be done, than to commit the object of so much anxiety in prayer to the gracious keeping of Israel's Shepherd. All the ordinary means of outward communication are removed: the child, though still an inhabitant of this lower world, is utterly unconscious of all that is passing, and unless returning consciousness be granted—which was not the case in the present instance—the teacher, in considering whether his duty has been performed, must look back to the opportunities which in days that are past he has either employed or neglected. Deeply solemn and

heart-searching are such considerations at such a time as this.

John Sharp remarks further:—

"*Third Month 5th.*—During the past week my mind has been under considerable concern, in consequence of the alarming illness of ———, and the prospect of his being about to exchange a transitory for an everlasting state of being, and that too, I fear, before the great change has taken place which all must experience if they would 'see the Lord.' He has been for several days apparently on the very verge of death. He now lies very quiet, and is totally unconscious. O, may the reflections which this event has excited not be lost upon me: may they increase my watchfulness on my own account, and make me doubly careful lest the blood of any under my charge be required at my hand in the awful day of account!"

After alluding to some other cases of illness, which at this time, besides those of the superintendents, existed in the school, J. S. continues:—

"This afflicted state of the family ought to induce great searching of heart. May it produce the proper effect.

"*Third Month 8th.*—Poor ——— died at about three this morning. I went to town in the afternoon to confer with his father respecting the interment. In passing through the streets of London in the evening, I was much affected with overhearing some profane conversation. In the coach, on my way home, I thought I was favoured with a fresh income of heavenly grace, for which I desire to be thankful.

"*Third Month 10th.*—The remains were interred at half-past four this afternoon; the weather being unfavourable, only a few of the children attended."

In a letter to his sister soon after, this event is thus alluded to :—

"Since I last wrote to thee we have lost one of our scholars by death. His complaint was inflammation of the brain. He remained for several days in a state of delirium; so much so, that from the time danger was first apprehended there was not a lucid interval, in which the awfulness of that change which he was about to pass through could be pointed out to him. May his sudden removal from time to eternity have its due effect on those who witnessed it!"

CHAPTER III.

1836—1837. ÆT. 24—25.

PROSPECT OF MARRIAGE—EXTRACTS FROM JOURNAL—RICHARD BARRETT'S VISIT TO FAMILIES—EFFORTS FOR THE RELIGIOUS WELFARE OF THE BOYS—DECEASE OF HIS FATHER—FURTHER EXTRACTS.

In the early part of 1836, much of John Sharp's time and attention was occupied by the important subject of his intended marriage with his friend Hannah Irwin, then engaged as governess at Wigton School. Soon after the Yearly Meeting he took a journey into the North, and visited his relatives at Darlington, proceeding afterwards to Carlisle and Wigton, in pursuance of the object he had in view. On returning to Croydon, and consulting a valued friend and counsellor on this subject, he thus records the advice he received — "Keep thy eye steadily fixed on him who has watched over thee all thy life long; eye the pointing of his finger; and he will cause that to be brought about which is most consistent with his will."

He thus writes under date of Eighth Month 7th:—

"*First-day.*—My mind too much occupied with the exciting events of the last few weeks. Oh that all may be held subservient to the will of him, whose loving kindness and gracious condescension ought to call forth the tribute of gratitude, thanksgiving, and entire devotedness!

" May I become more sensible of this, and by his grace act accordingly.

" He who is infinite in love and mercy, has indeed been my gracious and long-suffering Leader and Guide; and has abundantly verified in my experience the fulfilment of his promise,—' In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he will direct thy paths.' May the consciousness of this induce me more fully to confide in him through all the mutations of this changing scene, and yield a cheerful acquiescence in his will in all things.

" *Ninth Month* 17*th*.—Finished the life of Mary Fletcher, from which I trust I have received some instruction. She was eminently devoted to the service of her great Lord and Master, through a life of many conflicts and trials. She appears to have been favoured in a remarkable degree with supernatural aid, and a communion with departed spirits, particularly with her dear husband. Her accounts of their union and of his death (which she adverted to in her diary almost as often as the anniversaries returned) are peculiarly touching and interesting."

On the 9th of Tenth Month, while reviewing some of the events of the previous two years, John Sharp observes:—

" What progress have I made during this time in my spiritual course? Alas! there is much cause for deep humiliation. How abundantly has the Lord showered down his blessings upon me, and yet how numerous have been my sins of omission and commission. Let me endeavour briefly to take a retrospective view of the events of these two years, and seek for ability to devote myself unreservedly to the service of my God.

" During this period I have formed an acquaintance with

one to whom I expect (if spared another year) to be united by the tenderest of ties. How important is the step we are thus contemplating! I trust we both feel it to be so, and yet I can thankfully acknowledge, that a sweet feeling of peace has been, and continues to be, my favoured experience in looking towards our union for life. My desires [have] often [been] raised to my Heavenly Father that, if consistent with his will, and not otherwise, the connexion contemplated might be formed. [From our first acquaintance] to the time when we decided to become united in this most interesting relationship, many circumstances conspired to produce in my mind the conviction, that the eye of the Almighty did graciously rest upon us, and that our intention to be thus connected was in accordance with his will. For the evidence of his love, and the inestimable favour of Divine direction, which was, I believe, mercifully bestowed in many transactions connected with this important affair, I desire to cultivate a feeling of reverent thankfulness to the Author of all good.

"Another important event forcibly brought under notice in looking back upon the last two years, is the illness of my dear friends E. F. and E. B. The former has now been confined to one position more than twelve months, and the latter has been in a delicate and critical state of health for about the same period. During this time more has devolved upon me than would otherwise have been the case; and how has my duty been discharged?

"Truly he in whom dwell all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, has not been wanting on his part, and strength has been graciously afforded according to the day. Yet have I lamentably fallen short of what I believe the Lord would have had me to be, had there been a constant desire to follow him with full purpose of heart.

"O Lord, pardon my past transgressions and forgetfulness of thee, for the sake of him who died to save sinners, and enable me for the future to follow implicitly the leadings of thy Holy Spirit.

"Among the many blessings of which I am mercifully permitted to partake, I ought not to omit gratefully to commemorate that of being surrounded by kind and judicious friends, who love the Lord Jesus Christ with sincerity, and who have, from time to time, been permitted to extend a hand of help. Among the foremost of these is my beloved and much-valued friend, Peter Bedford, who, particularly since his residence in Croydon, has shown himself very kindly interested in my welfare, as regards both spirituals and temporals.

"How ought this and many other mercies which I daily receive at the Lord's hand, to excite the feeling of thankfulness, and a willingness to be wholly given up to his service and resigned to his will in all things!

"And now, in turning my attention a little to my present position, and also looking forward to the future, the desire is again raised that I may be cleansed from the defilements of sin which are yet in my garments, and experience the great work of the soul's sanctification to be progressing day by day.

"For the attainment of this most desirable object, I propose to myself to seek, through divine aid—

"1st.—For a fuller and deeper conviction of the exceeding sinfulness of sin and its offensive nature in the view of him who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity.

"2nd.—For an evidence that *my* sins are forgiven for the sake of him who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being *dead* unto *sin*, should *live* unto *righteousness*.

"3rd.—For ability to live henceforth not to myself, but to him who died for me and rose again.

"*Tenth Month* 11*th.*—On reading yesterday in G. Pilkington's work on the 'Doctrine of a Particular Providence,' I was struck with an observation to this effect:—That by the practice of shunning the sin that most easily besets us, we get a clearer view of the next in power. This I think has been in some degree proved in my experience. Oh that, by a close attention to the teachings of the Holy Spirit, I may know the work of sanctification to be continually progressing!

"In order to obtain, under the Divine blessing, the power to lay aside my most easily besetting sins, it appears needful for me to be more watchful in the following particulars, especially—

"1st.—To guard very carefully against wandering thoughts during religious meetings, and at *all* other times set apart for communion with my gracious Heavenly Father.

"2nd.—To be more diligent in the duty of frequent private waiting on the Lord.

"3rd.—To guard against *angry* feelings, particularly in my conduct and conversation with the boys, or in their presence.

"4th.—To rise earlier in the morning, which would enable me to devote the first part of the day to communion with him who alone can enable me to fulfil the least of his commandments, and to keep the covenants into which, I believe, he has enabled me to enter with him.

"*Eleventh Month* 19*th.*—I have still to regret my disinclination to rise early in the morning, and till I overcome this besetment, I fear I shall not make much progress spiritually. O Lord, be thou my strength in weakness.

"*Twelfth Month* 11*th.*—Preparative meeting. A time of merciful visitation, I believe, to some in our meeting. A

solemn meeting in the morning, in which S. S. was engaged in testimony, principally in addressing the wanderers. Richard Barrett had previously petitioned for them that they might be brought into that holy condition which occasions joy in heaven. In the second meeting, R. B. addressed the young men present, from whom, he said, the Lord would have some, who should become *strong* men if obedient to his will. In reminding those he addressed of the promise of the hundred-fold in this present life, he also referred to the promise, 'Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee:' and observed, that although there might be seasons in which poverty of spirit would be their portion, yet would this be a peaceful and contented poverty, and there would be the enjoyment of a continual feast. He also earnestly enforced the duty of fixing the mind on God, during the times set apart for divine worship.

"And now, O Lord, at the close of this day, in which evidence has been given of a continuance of thy mercy, enable me once more to renew my covenant with thee; forgive, O gracious Father, *all* my sins, for the sake of thy dear Son, and enable me to follow thee in all things, in an humble reliance on the aid of thy Holy Spirit.

"*Twelfth Month* 23*rd.*—Richard Barrett commenced his labours in this family.

"He sat with me in the evening, and was engaged to hold out the language of encouragement. He intimated a belief that there will be a duty for me to discharge in our meetings for discipline—that my 'testimony must be borne beyond the limits of this establishment,' and that my labours in this family must not be confined to individual private care. O Lord, strengthen me to perform all thou mayst see meet to require at my hand.

"R. B., in allusion to my prospect of marriage, expressed

a belief that I should see the consummation of my hopes, and that in so doing I should be mercifully permitted to feel the evidence of divine approbation.

"Oh that the season of refreshing I was favoured with on this occasion, may be remembered with gratitude, and that fruit may be brought forth according to the labour bestowed, to the glory of the great and good Husbandman!"

The following extract is interesting, as indicative of the anxiety felt for the best interests of the children committed to his trust:—

"*Twelfth Month* 31*st*.—I believe it incumbent on teachers to use their endeavours to promote the religious advancement of those under their care, and I think this object may be facilitated by studying their individual character attentively, and recording from time to time the plans adopted for effecting the end desired."

In connexion with the above extract, the labours of a beloved Friend for the welfare of the boys then in the Institution are recorded: in these labours of love John Sharp most cordially united. Interviews of a very interesting character were had with some of the disorderly and with others who had recently given but little cause of complaint; and the effect produced on them, and through them on the school at large, was very encouraging and comforting. A few days later John Sharp remarks:—

"I trust there is reason to believe the labours bestowed have been blessed to the boys. There has been a marked improvement in the conduct of many of them.

"*First-day Morning, First Month* 1*st*, 1837.—I am mer-

cifully spared to see the opening of another year; and, on a brief review of those that are past, I can indeed say, 'Surely goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life.'

"O Lord God! thou hast hitherto been my helper, and, by the gracious aid which thou hast afforded, I do believe some little advancement in the right way has been my favoured experience. O, carry on the work which thou hast begun in me, and let not thine eye pity nor thy hand spare, till thou hast made me what thou wouldst have me to be! Give me, O Lord, a willingness to make a *full* surrender of my soul to thee, and to withhold *nothing* which thou art pleased to call for at my hands.

"Oh that the watch may be much more steadily maintained, and that during the remainder of the time allotted for my continuance in this world, it may be my primary and constant endeavour to glorify God in body and in spirit, which are his.

"*First Month 9th.*—Received a few lines from Uncle E., informing me that my dear father was very ill.

"I took an early coach to Brighton, where I arrived at about half-past four o'clock, and found my dear father had been called from this changeful and (to him) afflictive scene; and we hope that through the mercy of God in Christ Jesus our Saviour, his spirit, cleansed from every defilement, has entered upon a state of everlasting rest and happiness.

"*First Month 15th.*—The relatives, assembled together to pay the last tribute of affection to my dear father's memory, followed the corpse a little before ten. Richard Barrett spoke at the ground. R. B. and William Gundry were also engaged in testimony in the morning and afternoon.

In the Fourth Month he notices a visit paid to Darlington and Wigton.

"*Fifth Month* 19*th*.—S. S. finished her visit to this family. She sat with the teachers separately. In addressing me she began with the text, 'If thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light; but if the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness.' This she said appeared fraught with encouragement, with instruction, and with warning. She also quoted the language of our Saviour, in which eternal life is graciously promised to those who hear the voice of the Heavenly Shepherd, and follow him. She urged the necessity of implicit obedience to the monitions of Divine grace, even in things that may appear small in our own sight, or in that of others. Nothing, she said, should be refused as small that the Great Master calls for, nor should anything be considered small that robs us of the peace that he bestows on his dependent and obedient children. Her chief engagement seemed to be to urge a close attention to the dictates of that Teacher that cannot be removed into a corner, and to maintain more and more a single eye to the glory of the great and good Giver of all. May the watchword be borne in mind, and fruit brought forth accordingly. In recommending an entire dependence on Divine aid, she alluded to the comprehensive nature of the gracious promise, 'In *all* thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths;' and said we might be inclined sometimes to 'acknowledge him' in some of our ways, and with reference to others suppose we may safely lean to our own understanding: this does not appear to be in strict accordance with the promise, [when] referred to in connexion with the injunction preceding it—'Trust in the Lord with all thine heart,'" &c.

Soon after this date, John Sharp notices the occurrence of the Yearly Meeting, and gives an abstract of the proceedings. It was his practice every year to note down for the information of his friends at a distance, and for his own after perusal, pretty copious memoranda of the principal subjects claiming attention at these interesting periods.

"*Sixth Month 4th.*—Jacob Green and J. J. Gurney at our meeting this morning. Jacob Green, in addressing young Friends, said he believed the time is coming, when some that are now silent will have to speak. In the evening Richard Barrett addressed some to whom he thought the language might apply, 'Ye have compassed this mountain long enough.'

"*Sixth Month 7th.*—Richard Barrett again addressed some 'in the rising brightness of their day.' It seems to me increasingly evident that the time is drawing near, in which, if obedience keep pace with knowledge, it will devolve on me to make, in some way, a more public acknowledgment of a desire to be found on the Lord's side, endeavouring to fill up, in humble dependence on him, that place in society and in the church which he may be pleased to manifest as his will concerning me.

"*Sixth Month 10th.*—But little satisfaction in the review of the past week.

"*Sixth Month 21st.*—Eleven days have elapsed since the last memorandum—how have they been spent? To the glory of God? Ah, no! there has been a great want of watchfulness, and consequently a falling into the snare of the fowler—indeed, into more snares than one. O Lord! pity my weakness, pardon my sins for the sake of thy beloved Son,

who died that I might live. O! be thou pleased to bring me into that state in which I may know a complete subjection of the will, and an humble dependence on thee alone for a daily supply of spiritual bread.

"*Sixth Month* 22*nd*.—'Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.'

"*Sixth Month* 28*th*. — Through unwatchfulness the tempter has prevailed over me this day. 'O, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?' What a mercy that there is a fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness! What would become of my soul but for the efficacy of the great atoning Sacrifice? And how encouraging, even to my sinful, rebellious heart, is the gracious promise, 'I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.' Again, O Lord, am I emboldened to implore forgiveness for the sake of a crucified Saviour, and to seek for ability to renew my covenant with thee, by the sacrifice of the whole heart.

"*Seventh Month* 1*st*.—Not sufficiently devoted to the one great object of my being—the glory of the great Creator.

"*Seventh Month* 2*nd*.—Rose in good time this morning, (*First-day*). A peaceful day on the whole. I had some serious conversation with [one of the boys] in the evening, I hope not without some good effect. Lord help his feeble endeavours to walk in the way in which thou wouldst have him to go. O be pleased to sanctify the natural liveliness of his disposition, and prepare him, if it be thy will, for service in thy church.

"*Seventh Month* 4*th*.—'O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever.'

"*Seventh Month* 12*th.*—Sensible of having sustained a loss this day as on many others, from neglecting to retire more frequently for the purpose of waiting on the Lord for a fresh supply of spiritual strength. I fear I have advanced but little since similar remarks were penned nine months ago."

CHAPTER IV.

1837—1838. ÆT. 25—26.

TOUR AMONG THE LAKES—MARRIAGE—VISIT TO NORTH WALES, ETC.—DECEASE OF E. F. BRADY.

THE period was now approaching for the accomplishment of his marriage, and though much engaged in the necessary arrangements for this object, in addition to the duties of his station, the extracts just given will have afforded evidence of his earnest desire, that the day's work, the important work of the soul's salvation, should be keeping pace with the day. While looking forward with brightest hopes to the consummation of his earthly wishes, he desired ever to keep in view, on the one hand the call for thanksgiving for mercies bestowed, and on the other the incentives which these feelings afforded to the humble endeavour to live not to himself, but to him who died for him, and rose again. Hence the occasional outburst of his full heart in the Psalmist's tuneful language; hence the record of earnest thoughtfulness as to the reality of the work of religion, and as to his actual growth in grace. To those who knew him, it was strikingly interesting and encouraging to observe, how constant, though it might be gradual, was his advance on the heavenly journey; how progressive the brighter and brighter radiance of that light, to which the path

of the just is likened, and which shines more and more unto the perfect day.

Leaving London on the 6th of Eighth Month, he proceeded by steam packet to Middlesbro', and thence by Darlington and Newcastle to Carlisle, with the view of taking the preliminary steps for the accomplishment of his marriage. On the 10th, he and his friend H. I. attended the adjourned Monthly Meeting at Carlisle, where they declared their intentions, and were liberated on the 18th. The interval was spent in visiting the lake district, and other objects of interest in the neighbourhood, accompanied by his dear sister R.

From Keswick they made an excursion into Borrowdale, which he thus describes:—

Eighth Month 15th.—After breakfast we hired a carriage, and took a drive into Borrowdale; we rode down the east side of the lake to Barrow Force, a waterfall of 122 feet; to our regret there was some scarcity of water—consequently the fall was not seen to so much advantage as sometimes. The next grand object of attraction was Lowdore, a fall of 360 feet, between two lofty crags, upon some rough masses of stone.

" Passing from hence we advanced further into Borrowdale, where we were entertained with a view of some of the wildest and grandest scenery in the lake district. We stopped the carriage a few minutes to visit Bowder Stone, an immense fragment of rock resembling a ship on its keel. It stands on a very narrow base—is 36 feet in perpendicular height, 62 feet long, contains 23,000 cubic feet, and weighs 1,971 tons.

" Having proceeded as far as Rosthwaite, we returned to

Grange, where we crossed the river, and came back on the other side of the lake,—a round of about fifteen miles."

He thus records in his journal the proceedings on the day of his marriage, which took place at Carlisle :—

"*Eighth Month* 22*nd*.—The ever-memorable day of my union with my beloved Hannah; a day to be remembered with feelings of heartfelt gratitude to that gracious Being who giveth us all things richly to enjoy: a day which appeared to me to be eminently crowned with the divine presence, and one to which I trust we shall often recur with grateful hearts, and the united desire that he, who (as we reverently believe,) has been pleased to bestow the smile of his approval on our union, will enable us faithfully to maintain the covenant which, on this day, we publicly entered into with each other.

"The morning, though not cloudless, was fair; and a party of twenty-two sat down to breakfast together.

"After breakfast the 103rd Psalm was read, and a solemn pause ensued, during which the desire was raised in my heart, and perhaps in many others, that the divine blessing might rest upon the proceedings of this interesting day.

"The meeting was attended by several Friends and others; it was soon settled, and in about a quarter of an hour we rose, and solemnly entered into covenant with each other by repeating the accustomed form. Lydia Sutton then expressed a few words, commencing with the remark that it was a solemn engagement, and referred to the occasion of a similar character which our Divine Master was pleased to honour with his company when personally on earth. At about a quarter to twelve John Little read the certificate.

"The meeting was solemn and quiet, and the peaceful

feeling that prevailed I was willing to accept as a token for good.

"After dinner, L. S. addressed the members of both families, and afterwards appeared in supplication. At about six my dearest Hannah took leave of her friends, and we proceeded together in a carriage to Penrith."

Some others of the wedding party afterwards joined them, and accompanied them to Liverpool. After describing some of the most interesting objects in that sea-port, John Sharp thus continues the account of their tour:—

"*Eighth Month 25th.*—After a great bustle at the docks, where we were in some danger of losing our luggage, we went on board the *Vale of Clwyd* steam packet, and enjoyed a delightful passage to Carnarvon. The sea was calm and smooth as a lake, and the view of the Welsh mountains was interesting. We passed within a stone's-throw of Great Orme's Head, and had a good view of the Menai Bridge, a fine structure: the bridge is 100 feet above high water, and appears truly elegant.

"On arriving at Carnarvon we paid a hasty visit to the castle. It was once very extensive, and occupied a commanding situation;—we saw the very small room in which Edward II. was born. From hence we proceeded to Llanberis, and retired to rest at the Dolbadern Inn, intending to rise at midnight and commence the ascent of Snowdon, with the hope of seeing the sun rise from the summit.

"*Eighth Month 26th.* — A very heavy thunderstorm having prevented our intended excursion during the night, we proceeded to ascend the mountain in the morning, accompanied by a guide.

"Previous to this, however, we had visited an interesting waterfall, of which we had a more favourable view, on

account of the fall of rain the previous night. It is situated about half-a-mile from the inn, and is called Cennant Mawr (the Great Chasm).

"In ascending Snowdon we had a delightful view of the scenery immediately surrounding, which we considered ample compensation for the difficulty; although our prospect from the top was much circumscribed, in consequence of the mist.

"The view of the pass of Llanberis from Snowdon was particularly fine. There are extensive copper mines about half-way up the mountain, from the summit of which upwards of twenty lakes are visible on a clear day.

"This mountain excursion occupied five hours. The ascent was much easier than we expected.

"From Llanberis we proceeded to Capel Curig, where the inn was so full that we could not be accommodated with a sitting-room, or we should have liked to spend a quiet First-day here.

"*Eighth Month* 27*th*.—We took a little walk in the morning, and being afterwards disappointed of seats in the coach, we hired a conveyance to Llangollen, where we arrived late in the evening. On our way we visited two fine waterfalls, Rhaidr y Wennol (the Fall of the Swallow), and the fall of the Conway (Rhaidr Mawr). We dined at Cennidge Inn, and had a fine ride through the vale of Llangollen in the evening.

"*Eighth Month* 28*th*.—After breakfast we all went together to visit the celebrated aqueduct—a stupendous undertaking: it is thrown across the vale of Llangollen for the purpose of continuing the course of the Ellesmere canal, which thus passes over the beautifully diversified valley through which the Dee winds its course.

"On our return to Llangollen, we directed our steps towards Plas Newydd, the charming retreat of the 'recluses

of Llangollen.' These two singular ladies—'Lady Eleanor Butler and Miss Ponsonby'—died a few years ago, and were buried in the same tomb at Llangollen. Having made a vow of celibacy in early life, they retreated to this vale, where they lived together for above half a century, having contracted a strong and mutual attachment for each other.

"We next ascended the hill near Llangollen on which are the remains of Castle Dinas Bran: the hill is 900 feet above the surface of the Dee, and commands an extensive view of the far-famed vale of Llangollen.

"In the evening we proceeded together to Shrewsbury, [the rest of the company] intending to leave the next morning for Birmingham.

"*Eighth Month* 29*th.*—Took a stroll before breakfast to the Quarry Walks, and passed through some of the principal streets of Shrewsbury. These walks are a favourite place of resort with the inhabitants: they occupy about twelve acres of ground, and are beautifully shaded by rows of lime trees. From Shrewsbury we proceeded through Bridgenorth, Coalbrook Dale, &c., to Oxford, staying for an hour at Worcester. We did not reach Oxford till after one in the morning.

"*Eighth Month* 30*th.*—Before leaving Oxford, we paid a hasty visit to the Bodleian Library, and viewed the exterior of some of the colleges. On arriving in London, we remained at the Spread Eagle till the last coach was ready, and by it we reached Croydon, glad to feel ourselves at home at last, although our little excursion was a time of much enjoyment."

Being thus comfortably settled in the cottage adjoining the school, the desires of his heart accomplished, his position in life changed, and new duties and responsibilities undertaken, John Sharp was very careful not

to allow these duties to interfere with those of his position in the establishment. Punctual in his attendance, circumspect in his conduct before the children, and often evincing, in various ways, his anxiety for their best welfare, the step he had taken, far from narrowing his usefulness in the school, seemed rather to heighten the zest and extend the efficiency of his labours for the general good.

In recording a visit from a valued Friend, in the station of minister, soon after their marriage, John Sharp writes :—

"*Ninth Month* 27*th*.—Our dear friend addressed us after breakfast;—the watchword he had to communicate seemed to be to this effect:—Seek not an appointment for yourselves; but wait on the Lord, and be willing to do whatever he may call for at your hands.

"*First Month* 3*rd*, 1838.—A continued sense of the unmerited love and mercy of the Almighty Creator and Preserver of all things, calls for the reverent and devout acknowledgment, that he alone has a right to rule and reign in the hearts of all his creatures, and to call for any sacrifice at their hands which may be consistent with his holy will. Enable me, O Lord, so to enjoy the blessings of which I am mercifully permitted to partake, that every action may be regulated by the constantly prevailing desire for the promotion of thy glory, and that every thought may be brought into subjection to thy holy will."

In the early part of this year the sympathies of John Sharp, and of the family at the school generally, were especially called forth, on account of the much increased illness and more rapid decline of the justly-

valued head of the establishment. Edward F. Brady, whose services had proved so beneficial, whose influence over the boys, especially, had been instrumental in raising the tone of good feeling and the love of virtue amongst them, was now so reduced and prostrated by the weakening effects of his malady, that his friends became aware that the struggle could not be expected to endure much longer. During the few months that preceded his decease, John Sharp's time seems to have been so fully occupied, as to prevent much record of passing events in his journal. The subjoined account of the closing scene was addressed to an intimate friend, who was at one time associated with him in the work of tuition. After alluding to the loss the institution had sustained, he thus continues:—

"*Fourth Month* 14*th*, 1838.—I refer to the removal of our dear friend Edward F. Brady, whom it has pleased the Supreme Disposer of events to release from a state of trial and suffering; and we can rejoicingly believe, that through the mercy and merits of the Saviour of men, his purified spirit has gained admittance into one of the many mansions prepared for the reception of his humble, dependent and obedient followers. This was an event for which we were in degree prepared by the gradual decline of our dear friend, whose frail tabernacle was so far reduced prior to the solemn event, that, for some days previous to his departure, his removal from a state of works to one of rewards was almost hourly expected. The solemn event has now deprived us of a friend and counsellor, whose pious example and patient resignation to the divine will, will long be sweetly, and I trust profitably, remembered by his survivors. He had

himself been longing for his release, having the consoling evidence that his sins had gone beforehand to judgment, and the sting of death was taken away. He received strength at intervals, to send for many of his friends in Croydon, to take a last farewell for this world; and strikingly appropriate was the advice he was commissioned and strengthened to impart, varying according to the circumstances of those who were addressed, and calculated to make a powerful and lasting impression on their minds. His day's work is now done, and, although his loss is keenly felt by his surviving relations and friends, there is truly no cause to mourn, but much to rejoice on his account.

"Our dear friend E. F. B. continued in the full possession of his faculties till about four o'clock last Third-day afternoon, when he sank into a state of unconsciousness, which continued till the last struggle was over. This took place at about half-past twelve o'clock A.M., on the 11th. I was present at the close, as were also our dear friend Peter Bedford (who was unremitting in his kind attentions), and one or two near relatives. The remains are to be interred on First-day morning after meeting; the corpse to be taken into meeting, which is to commence at eleven o'clock. I doubt not we shall have thy sympathy on the occasion, though not present personally."

The event here recorded was one which was felt at the time to involve a very great loss to the interesting establishment over which Edward F. Brady was placed. Endowed as he was with peculiar qualifications for exercising a powerful influence over the youthful mind, and anxious to employ the talents with which he was thus entrusted to the glory and honour of his Divine Master, and to the extension of his kingdom, it would

seem that the institution which had derived so much benefit from his labours, could ill dispense with their continuance. Many were they who, on that solemn day of the interment,—children, officers in the school, and loving and interested friends from far and near,—felt as though a rent were made, a void created, which could not readily be repaired or filled. But he who had seen meet, in his own inscrutable counsel, thus to remove the valued head, was, we may reverently believe, gradually preparing the beloved subject of this memoir, and enduing him with qualifications for the vacant post. Evidence of this will, we think, be apparent as we pursue the thread of the narrative; and we may, perhaps, from the consideration of this circumstance, be permitted to have our faith a little strengthened, in the assurance that, for all the requirements of his church and family, our Heavenly Father can and will provide.

CHAPTER V.

1838—1839. ÆT. 26—27.

YEARLY MEETING — THOMAS HUTCHINSON'S ILLNESS — ELIZABETH DUDLEY'S VISIT — LETTER TO A FRIEND — THOMAS HUTCHINSON'S DECEASE — JOURNEY TO NORTH OF ENGLAND — TOUR IN SCOTLAND — VISIT TO DARLINGTON — ACKWORTH GENERAL MEETING — RETURN HOME.

After the usual somewhat detailed account of the proceedings of the Yearly Meeting, we find the following entry, under date of Sixth Month 2nd:—

"Returned from attending the closing sitting of the Yearly Meeting. This (as well as many of the former sittings) was a particularly solemn and instructive season. May the fruit appear in an increase of devotedness to the Lord's service, and a more entire surrender of the soul to him!"

On the 3rd of Sixth Month, John Sharp records the visit of a much valued friend to the institution. Alluding to his religious services, he says:—

"In supplication on behalf of the family, and particularly for 'the delegated shepherds and shepherdesses,' he petitioned that at the solemn day of account, when the inquiry shall be made to each of us, 'Where are the sheep I left with thee in the wilderness?' the answer may be, 'Lord, here am I, and the children whom thou hast given me.'

"*Sixth Month 4th.*—Our dear friend remained with us to-day. In parting, he expressed to the teachers and others his Christian solicitude on our behalf; he compared the influence our conduct has upon others to the stone cast into a lake, where one portion of water acts upon another; showing, in a striking manner, that a single good or false step, taken by those to whom children are looking up for an example, may have, through them, a very powerful influence over the actions of many among whom their lot may in a future day be cast; and these again will exert an influence over others, and so on to an extent beyond our calculations.

"*Sixth Month 6th.*—S. and M. N. attended our meeting, and took tea with us in the evening. They had a religious interview with us, in which the language of encouragement was held out; and the necessity of single and entire dependence on our Almighty Helper was urged. M. N. revived as a watchword, for me in particular: Be instant in prayer; patient in tribulation.

"*Sixth Month 8th.*—Not sufficiently watchful over my temper, and consequently became impatient with the boys; too much *hurried* the last few days;—very little time for retirement, in which I am more and more convinced my strength in a great measure consists.

"*Seventh Month 15th.*—During the last two weeks we have been much concerned on account of Thomas Hutchinson's illness;—he is gone to Brighton for the benefit of his health, which appears in a very precarious state. My situation has thus been very unfavourable to any advancement in a spiritual sense:—not that I am on this account excused;—no—these are circumstances beyond our control; and the apostolic injunction appears to apply with peculiar force:—'Be careful for nothing; but in everything, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God.'

Thomas Hutchinson was the brother-in-law of Edward F. Brady, and was becoming much valued as an efficient and exemplary teacher in the establishment. With the zeal and devotion of a brother, he had watched over and soothed the declining days of the late superintendent. He gave early promise of a career of much future usefulness; and his illness, as will be observed from the preceding memorandum, caused considerable anxiety, under the apprehension that, in the then somewhat stripped state of the institution, a further loss might be sustained in the removal of one so justly valued and beloved. The event proved that these fears were but too well founded. From this period he was unable regularly to resume his duties at the school; and experiencing the various fluctuations so generally observed in consumption,—sometimes apparently rallying, and then again sinking perhaps lower than before,—he lingered till the following spring, when exhausted nature yielded, and he quietly and peacefully passed away.

"*Eighth Month* 22*nd*.—The first anniversary of our marriage. On a review of the past year, there is indeed cause for thankfulness, in the remembrance of the many mercies we have received at the hands of our all-merciful Creator. May we be made more and more sensible of his unmerited goodness, and increasingly devoted to his service. I fear I have not made much progress, if any, of late, in my spiritual course; nevertheless, the desire is at times raised, that the Almighty would be pleased to carry forward the work of purification, and bring me into a state of acceptance with him. O Lord, enable me to walk daily in thy fear, taking up the cross, and following on to know thee, placing

my dependence upon thee, and endeavouring in all things to follow the guidance of thy Holy Spirit, and to keep a single eye to thy glory."

On the 23rd he records the birth of his eldest child.

"*Ninth Month 5th.*—Elizabeth Dudley was at our meeting, and had afterwards a religious opportunity with my dear Hannah and myself. Her address was of an encouraging character. She observed that she had often thought of our union, and believed it was one chosen in wisest ordering for us; she alluded to the importance of being united in the best sense; not only closely allied to each other by the ties of conjugal affection and religious fellowship, but also united, by living faith, with the great Head of the church; thus forming a threefold cord not easily broken. In reviving the expression, 'How can two walk together except they are agreed?' she adverted to another passage of Scripture, 'If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven;' and encouraged us to take hold of this gracious and immutable declaration, and ask largely and believingly. In addressing me more particularly she referred to the language applied to Asher, 'Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be;' also the charge of Paul to Timothy, 'Be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.'

"*Ninth Month 26th.*—I have just finished reading 'Rutty's Spiritual Diary,' from which (although abounding with homely expressions, and very tautological,) I think I have derived some benefit. His watchfulness and frequent self-examination are indeed worthy of imitation. 'What lack I yet?' was a query often proposed by him; and it is one which there is abundant occasion for me to bring home, and faithfully apply to myself. What would now be the

answer? More frequent retirement and waiting upon the Author of all our mercies for a renewal of strength, and increase of ability to walk acceptably before him; also to cultivate more earnestly feelings of reverential dependence on my Heavenly Father, and a constant remembrance of my Saviour's presence, during seasons of religious retirement, whether in public or private. A diligent attention to these points, is, I believe, essential to my growth in grace, and seems peculiarly needful in my present state, as regards the spiritual journey.

"*Tenth Month* 28*th*.—Too little opportunity during the last four weeks for serious reflection and religious retirement, from a press of engagements under our peculiar circumstances [arising from the continued indisposition of Thomas Hutchinson, and the engagement of temporary assistance to supply his place].

"Not much religious advancement during the past month; —perhaps none at all. O Lord! enable me more and more to run in the way of thy commandments: send forth thy light and thy truth;—let them lead me. O bring us yet more into a united desire to serve thee faithfully in all things, and to prefer Jerusalem before our chief joy!

"*Twelfth Month* 2*nd*.—Some earnest desires have been felt of late, for closer union and communion with my Maker, and for a deliverance from those incumbrances which are in the way of my progress heavenward. Alas! that they should be merely *desires*. I fear there has been no advancement since I wrote before, five weeks ago. I attended the Monthly Meeting on the 24th ult. J. F. M. returned his certificate, and testified to the mercy and goodness of his great Master, who had supported and strengthened him during his late engagement. On hearing his simple account of the gracious dealings of the Lord with him, when following an apprehended call to labour in

another part of the vineyard, I was forcibly reminded of the language, 'He calleth his own sheep *by name*, and leadeth them out.'

"*Twelfth Month* 30*th*.—Four weeks have again elapsed since I penned the last memorandum. The desire of my heart this day is, in contemplating the near approach of the commencement of another year, Lord, break down and remove all that separates me from thee, retards my advancement heavenward, and prevents that entire devotedness and full surrender that thou art calling for. O grant that my beloved partner may, with myself, press forward with greater diligence towards the mark for the prize of our high calling of thee, O God, in Christ Jesus; enable us to lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us, and run with patience the race that is set before us. Grant, O Lord, that our affections may be set on things above; that our dearest earthly treasures may all be held in subserviency to the one great object of our being, even the glory of thee, our great Creator: and, should it please thee to spare the precious pledge of our love, enable us to seek day by day for the aid of thy Holy Spirit, that by it we may be enabled to bring her up in thy nurture and admonition. And O be thou pleased to guide, guard, and protect her, to preserve her in thy fear, and, if it please thee, make her instrumental in promoting thy glory.

The following letter to a friend was probably written in the early part of the year 1839:—

"Under the feeling of a lively desire for thy present and everlasting welfare, I incline to address thee with a few lines; and in endeavouring to draw thy attention for a time to considerations of the highest importance, I wish it by no means to be understood that I write as one that has already attained; far from it; but as one who would gladly be thy

companion in pressing towards the mark for the prize of our high calling; forgetting those things that are behind, &c.

"Various are the devices of our unwearied enemy, and diversified the appearances under which he seeks to beguile the unwatchful. He is stronger than we are, and knows how to adapt his snares to our dispositions and peculiar besetments. How encouraging is it then to know, that, while we are insufficient of ourselves even to think a good thought, help is laid upon one that is mighty; and that he to whom is committed all power in heaven and in earth has graciously declared: 'Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out.' 'Satan hath desired to have thee,' was the language addressed by our Saviour, to one of his disciples; and it is a language, my dear friend, which I believe may be applied to thee. But it is no sin to be tempted; 'God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will, with the temptation, also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.' O that thou mayst be enabled to ask of him who is stronger than the strong man armed, to furnish thee with the weapons necessary for the Christian warfare, even the whole armour of God, wherewith thou mayst be able to withstand the fiery darts of the wicked one.

"It is of the Lord's mercy that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not; and as he has been pleased to permit us to see the opening of another year, let us be concerned faithfully to examine ourselves, and see whether we are endeavouring, in our daily conduct and conversation, to glorify our Heavenly Father, by living in conformity with his divine will concerning us. I long to see thee, in the brightness of thy days, fully devoted to the service of the best of masters; and earnestly desire that thou mayst be strengthened and made willing to surrender

thy heart as a whole burnt offering to him, who alone has a right to rule and reign there.

"We cannot serve two masters; how highly then does it behove us to obey the apostolic injunction: 'Yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead;' otherwise we shall be found in the service of the enemy of all good—there is not another alternative. But if we are above all things solicitous to put off the old man with his deeds, and to put on the new man, who, after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness; in other words, if we are subjects of the regenerating influence of divine grace, we shall be permitted to experience that there are no joys comparable to the joys of God's salvation. The Christian's life is a continual warfare; but those who enter upon it under a sense of their own insufficiency, and, in humble dependence on divine aid, strive to follow the unconquered Captain, will eventually be made more than conquerors, through him that loved them. That this may be thy favoured portion, is the earnest desire of thy sincere friend and well-wisher,

JOHN SHARP.

Second Month 10*th*.—Another year has commenced, and another anniversary of my birth come round, since the last memorandum was made. The cry is still, 'O my leanness, my leanness!' I do ardently long to be set free from all the bonds of sin and Satan, and introduced into the glorious liberty of the children of God. Thou, O Lord, alone knowest my weakness and the power of the subtle adversary; do thou enable me to place all my dependence on thee, and by thy power to withstand his fiery darts.

"Grant that my dear partner may, with myself, be so brought under the powerful, renovating, sanctifying influence of thy Spirit, that we may even experience every thought to be brought into the obedience of Christ, and that a willing-

ness may be wrought in us to make a full surrender of all thou art calling for at our hands. And oh that thy blessing may abundantly rest on our beloved little one. Grant that, whatever may be her allotment in this world, she may, should her life be spared, become one of the lambs of thy fold; and then, through all the mutations of this transitory state, she will be permitted to go in and out before thee, and find pasture.

"*Third Month* 20*th.*—A little before nine this evening, our dear young friend Thomas Hutchinson was removed from works to rewards. This event we have been daily expecting. How consoling is the belief, that, through the mercy of our Heavenly Father, and the merits of the Redeemer, an entrance is ministered to him into the everlasting kingdom.

"*Third Month* 24*th.*—The day appointed for the interment of the remains of Thomas Brewster and Thomas Hutchinson, the former aged eighty-five, the latter twenty. Thus have we a striking contrast, in the removal of one whose life was lengthened beyond what is usually the lot of mortals, and of another cut down in his prime, like the flowers of the field. May the solemn event have an awakening influence over all who may meet together this day to pay the last sad tribute of affection, and indeed over all who may witness the solemn spectacle.

"*Third Month* 25*th.*—The remains of our late friend Thomas Brewster were interred at the close of the meeting yesterday morning; it was largely attended. Hannah Backhouse, Elizabeth Dudley, Richard Barrett and Rachel Forster were engaged in testimony; and E. D. and H. B. in supplication. Previously to our going to meeting, the children had an opportunity of seeing the remains of Thomas Hutchinson; they went in companies, and I thought it best to see the elder boys last, feeling it required of me to address

a few words to them on the occasion, which I was enabled to accomplish to my own peace. The interment of the remains took place at four in the afternoon. Sarah Grubb addressed the meeting at some length, particularly the children and youth. I trust the day has been one of instruction to many.

"*Fourth Month* 14*th.*—Give me, O Lord, to witness more of that entire surrender which thou art calling for at my hands. Cleanse thou me from secret faults. Enable me to resist all the attacks of the enemy in thought, word, and deed; and give me ability to adopt in sincerity the language—'I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart.'

"*Fourth Month* 21*st.*—During the past week something has been known of a capacity to draw nigh unto God. O for a constant abiding in Christ Jesus, the living vine!"

In the Seventh Month of this year, during the school vacation, John Sharp paid a visit to his relatives in the North of England; his wife and child having previously gone to Carlisle. He staid on his way at Penketh, and alludes with much interest to his attendance of the General Meeting of that Institution.

"*Seventh Month* 5*th.*—Left London, per railway, at half-past eight last evening, and reached Warrington about six o'clock this morning. Walked to Penketh, about three miles, to attend the examination, to commence at eleven. This was conducted chiefly by William Thistlethwaite. The school (consisting of about twenty-nine boys and sixteen girls,) was divided into three classes, each class containing some of both sexes. The amount of literary instruction imparted is very considerable: the boys are a good deal employed in the garden, and the girls in house-work; they have only one

female servant. The girls have no school before breakfast, being employed during that time in domestic duties; each girl has some office to perform every day. The boys are occupied about three hours a day, on an average, in agricultural pursuits, and four or five hours in receiving literary instruction. They learn no lessons by rote. Three hours a week are especially devoted to the study of the Scriptures, one hour on First-day afternoon, and one on First and Fifth-day evenings; on the other evenings the hour is spent in a familiar lecture or conversation with the children."

From Penketh, John Sharp proceeded by Manchester to Matlock Bath, in order to spend a few days with his brother and sister, the latter of whom was in a delicate state of health. He afterwards rejoined his wife and little girl at Carlisle.

"*Seventh Month* 14*th.*—Went to Moorhouse meeting in the morning; the meeting-house is large, there having formerly been a considerable number of Friends here. Grandfather remembers when the ministers' gallery was full, and about forty families attended. The comparison between the former and present state of the meeting much affected my mind, and the petition was raised, 'Revive thy work in the midst of the years.' There were only three persons at meeting besides ourselves.

"*Seventh Month* 15*th.*—Received a letter from my brother George, which decided my going to Edinburgh to-morrow morning to meet him there, intending to make a little excursion from thence into the mountain and lake district in the neighbourhood of Loch Katrine, &c.

"*Seventh Month* 16*th.*—On arriving at Edinburgh, my brother joined me, and we proceeded to visit various objects of interest in this 'modern Athens,' and were abundantly

gratified. Edinburgh has been styled the City of Palaces; and truly when we survey the splendour and elegance of its public buildings, the chasteness and richness of its architecture, and the spaciousness of its streets, circuses, &c., it appears to merit the designation. This remark, however, will only apply to that part of the city which is of more modern erection; for in passing through some of the worst streets, or rather 'closes' and 'wynds,' as they are not inappropriately styled, feelings of disgust are excited at the filthiness and unpleasant effluvia that prevail.

"One of the first objects that attracted our notice was the castle, situated on a rock, inaccessible except on one side; it commands a good view of the city and neighbourhood. On the castle wall is situated an immense cannon, called 'Mons Meg,' supposed to have been cast at Mons in the year 1486. The diameter of the balls is about two feet. We next proceeded to Holyrood House; saw the ruins of the chapel, also the apartments occupied by Mary Queen of Scots, which contained several pieces of furniture and other relics of those days. We also saw the apartments occupied by Charles X. of France, and by George IV. on his visit to Scotland.

"Leaving Holyrood Palace, and passing through some of the principal streets, we came to Arthur's Seat, a lofty eminence, from which a commanding view of the city may be had. Descending on the rugged side of this elevation, we walked along the base of some projecting rocks, called Salisbury Crags. Thence we passed the High School, a fine building, newly erected.

"*Seventh Month* 17*th.*—We recommenced our ramble before breakfast, through Queen Street, Princes Street, &c. In the latter is situated the building for the Royal Institution, erected on an earthen mound, which was raised to

unite two parts of the city formerly separated by a deep ravine. The University next claimed our attention. After breakfast we ascended Calton Hill, on which are situated Nelson's Monument, the Observatory, &c. It was now time to leave Edinburgh: we proceeded to Leith, and went on board a steam-packet for Stirling. We had an interesting journey. Between Alloa and Stirling, a distance of only seven miles by land, the windings of the Forth are so considerable as to make it about twenty by water. Sometimes, after leaving Alloa, it was seen directly before us as if we were approaching it; again it appeared on our right, then on our left: the same remark might be made of Stirling as we drew near it. On reaching the latter place, we found a coach ready to go on to Callander; we were, therefore, obliged to forego the pleasure of ascending Stirling Castle, the top of which is said to command one of the most interesting views in the country. On arriving at Callander, we lost no time in visiting Bracklin Bridge, a romantic spot, from which a waterfall is seen to great advantage. We were accompanied by a young gentleman from America, who had travelled much on that continent, and visited the falls of Niagara, &c.; he considered he had never seen anything of the kind to equal this in beauty. Our guides were two interesting little Highland lassies, who had twice before traversed the same track in the course of the day, but did not seem much fatigued.

"*Seventh Month* 18*th*.—Hitherto we have enjoyed fair weather on the whole: this morning we left Callander, in heavy rain, which continued through the day. We breakfasted at Stewart's Inn at the Trosachs. Just before reaching this spot the scenery of this delightful country burst upon the view; and, although seen through so unfavourable a medium, the combination of beauty and sublimity which it

presented was such as is rarely to be met with, and appeared only to want fair weather, in order to realize the vivid descriptions of those who have written accounts of Highland scenery. Unpropitious as the weather proved, twenty-four hours were more than we had to spare; we, therefore, proceeded to the head of Loch Katrine, down which we were to be towed, a distance of ten miles. Towards the end of the lake the swell was such, that it required all the pilot's skill to prevent the swamping of the boat by the waves; the boatmen considered there had not been so stormy a passage for two years. Having arrived at the end of the lake, we had five miles to walk across the mountains to a small inn at Inversnaid, on the margin of Loch Lomond. On our way thither we entered the hut of an old man, said to have attained the age of 105 years; he was reclining on a bed, apparently unconscious of our presence; his son and daughter were seated at their peat fire-side. At Inversnaid (where there is a waterfall much swollen at present by the heavy rains) we went on board the steam-packet passing up Loch Lomond; but, owing to the incessant rain and dense mist, the sublimity of the scene was entirely lost to us. On the return of the vessel we were landed at Tarbet. The rain continued the rest of the day, and we retired to rest, with the intention of ascending Ben Lomond next morning if the weather should prove propitious.

"*Seventh Month* 19*th*.—The morning cloudy and threatening more rain: after breakfast the weather appearing rather more settled, and we being necessarily detained at Tarbet, in consequence of the steamer not coming up as usual last evening, we concluded to walk to the head of Loch Long, distant about two miles, and from thence about five miles more, down the pass of Glencoe, to meet the coach from Inverary. Having entered Glencoe, the rain

again came on, and gradually increased in vehemence as we proceeded; we were soon wet through, although we frequently took shelter under the huge rocks which were interspersed in the valley. This is truly a wild, romantic spot. Among the mountains is one supposed to be an extinct volcano, remarkable for its peculiar shape. It is called Ben Arthur, or the Cobbler, from a supposed resemblance to a cobbler sitting at his work. About five miles down this pass is a seat called, 'Rest and be thankful,' approached by a winding path. About a mile from this spot, we gave up our intention of reaching it, and took shelter in a cottage on the moors, where a woman was spinning by the fireside, attended by her little girl. Here we remained till the coach came up. We had not proceeded far before the horses became completely exhausted, and could advance no further; the passengers were therefore obliged to walk the rest of the way through the rain. On the return of the steam-packet from the head of the lake, we again went on board, and were conveyed to Balloch, thence to Dumbarton, and from the latter town per steamer to Glasgow. Here ended our tour in the Highlands, and we were quite ready for a night's repose."

He now rejoined his wife at Carlisle, and after a few days' stay, they left their relatives there and proceeded to Darlington. John Sharp says:—

"On our way to the railway station, a text of scripture was presented to my mind, which I found it best to express to our dear parents, with a feeling of religious interest and desires for their best welfare. 'In the way of righteousness there is life; and in the pathway thereof there is no death.' We arrived at Darlington about six in the evening, and received a cordial welcome from our dear brother and sister.

"*Seventh Month 26th.*—My dear H., sister R. and myself, went over in a gig to Staindrop. In returning we visited Raby Castle, the seat of the Duke of Cleveland, one of the best specimens of the ancient baronial residences now remaining. It is in a good state of preservation, not being suffered to go to ruin. The entrance-hall has an imposing appearance. There is a passage wide enough for a coach and four to enter. The roof is supported by strong pillars, —a most beautiful imitation of marble. We saw the principal rooms in the castle. The circular room is superbly furnished: each chair (richly gilded) is said to have cost £100. Another apartment is called the Chinese room, and is furnished in the Chinese style. We also went through the dining and drawing-rooms, some of the principal bedrooms, and a large room fitted up as a museum, and containing many interesting specimens."

Leaving Darlington on the 29th, they proceeded to Ackworth, in order to attend the General Meeting, which commenced on the 31st. J. S. observes:—

"The arrangements for the examination are different from those which were acted upon when I was here four years ago. About forty-seven boys who have not been long in the school were examined by a committee of Friends, who volunteered their services for the purpose; the rest of the boys were then divided into three portions, each of which was intended to represent a fair average specimen of the attainments of the whole school. I attended the committee appointed to examine the Latin class, and was much pleased with the result. The first class are reading Virgil, and evinced great readiness in scanning and translating, as well as in parsing, and replies to questions on the grammatical construction of the sentences. The second class

performed with equal credit; they are reading Cæsar. The third class have just commenced the study. The whole Latin class contains twenty-three boys, including the two youngest apprentices."

After describing the general examination and the educational meeting, John Sharp alludes to the following First-day which they spent at the school with much interest; at its close he remarks:—

"We took leave of our friends at the Institution before retiring to our lodgings, and I think we can all unite in saying, that it has been good for us to spend a little time with them, and tended to strengthen the bond of union which it is very desirable to encourage among those who are engaged in our interesting and responsible employment."

Proceeding to Hull, they took the "Victoria" steam-packet, and had a favourable passage to London.

"*Eighth Month 6th.*—We arrived in London about six this evening; came to Croydon by railway, and reached home about eight o'clock, where we were much pleased to find ourselves once more comfortably housed, and not, I trust, without a united feeling of thankfulness to him in whom we live and move and have our being."

CHAPTER VI.

1839—40. ÆT. 27—28.

EXTRACTS FROM JOURNAL—ILLNESS IN THE SCHOOL—DECEASE OF TWO OF THE BOYS—YEARLY MEETING—RELIGIOUS VISIT OF A FRIEND TO THE SCHOOL—FURTHER EXTRACTS FROM JOURNAL.

It will, we think, be evident, on a perusal of the foregoing chapter, that the earnest wish so strongly entertained, to be found walking in the fear of the Lord and in entire devotion to his service, did not, in the mind of John Sharp, lead to any ascetic or gloomy renunciation of the amenities and lawful enjoyments of life. He availed himself of those opportunities for admiring the beauties of nature, and for social intercourse with relatives and friends, which are not only entirely compatible with the true spirit of the Gospel, but which tend, if rightly enjoyed, to the maturity and perfection of the Christian character. The gradual development of this character, through the continued merciful visitations of divine grace, becomes increasingly apparent, as from step to step we follow in idea his earthly course, so far as we can do this from his remaining letters and memoranda.

Continuing the extracts, we find the following entry :—

"*Eighth Month 27th.*—It is now three weeks since our return to the school. My mind has at times been permitted

to feel a degree of soul-sustaining peace and confidence in divine assistance and support. During the last two or three days, however, it has been given me to see how very far I fall short of the requirements of my great and gracious Creator; and the desire has been afresh excited that he will graciously condescend to bestow the needful qualification, and point out with more and more clearness the path in which he would have me to walk, and the way in which it is his will that I should glorify his name. O Lord, enable me to devote myself fully and without reserve to the duties which devolve upon me in this interesting family; make me increasingly the instrument of good to the tender charge entrusted to my care; grant that I may not prove in anywise a stumbling-block to them; but rather that I may be privileged to lead them by precept and example to their Saviour and Redeemer. And if it be thy will that one so unworthy should have any service allotted him in thy militant church, be pleased to point out the path of duty, and enable me faithfully to walk therein. And in thy unfailing mercy and loving kindness, O Lord, do thou regard with compassion and love the objects of my tenderest solicitude. Be pleased so to impress my beloved partner and myself with a deep sense of thy boundless love, and of the debt of gratitude we owe thee, that we may indeed be brought, by our dear Saviour's constraining love, to live no longer to ourselves, but to him who died for us and rose again. Enable us to lay aside every weight, and every easily besetting sin, and to run with patience the race that is set before us; and give us the ability (which comes from thee alone,) to train up our beloved little one in the way of thy commandments. O Lord God! bless and preserve the various members of this interesting family, and incline the hearts of all those to whom the training of the youthful mind is entrusted, to apply day by

day to thee for strength and ability to go in and out before their charge with acceptance in thy sight, and to feel that without thee they can do nothing.

" *Ninth Month 4th.*—Had an interview with [one of the boys] in the prospect of his leaving school. He received the advice given in a way that leads me to hope it will not all be lost upon him.

" Grant, Lord, that thy blessing may rest on this and all right endeavours to promote the religious advancement of those under my care.

" *Ninth Month 18th.*—I have had this day to mourn over my shortcomings; and to inquire how it is that so little of an advancement in the right way is known. Surely much has been received, and the call is strong to a life of greater devotedness. ' Lord, quicken thou me according to thy word.'

" *Tenth Month 6th.*—I have been eighteen years a member of this family.—In meeting this morning, Richard Barrett closed an impressive communication with this injunction—' Keep nothing back from thy household; keep nothing back from the church; keep nothing back from thy children; keep nothing back from thy husband—from thy wife; O keep nothing back from the bridegroom of thy soul.'

" *Tenth Month 7th.*—How can I be sufficiently thankful to thee, O Lord, the author of every blessing, for the good gifts which thou hast been pleased abundantly to bestow upon me.

" Enable me, I beseech thee, to devote the prime of life to thy service, and especially to promote thy glory in the family in which my lot has so long been cast.

" *Tenth Month 14th.*—O Lord, preserve me day by day in thy fear. Enable me to serve thee better, and to love thee more than I have ever yet done.

" *Tenth Month* 21*st.*—Permit me, O Lord, to return thee thanks for the contriting influences of thy Spirit, with which thou art in mercy condescending to visit me. Give me to see with increasing clearness the path in which thou wouldst have me to walk. Purge away the dross, the tin, and the reprobate silver; and be pleased to qualify me for service in that way in which it is thy gracious design that I should glorify thee.

" *Tenth Month* 22*nd.*—Had an interview with my dear friend Peter Bedford last evening, in which I told him that I apprehended the time might not be far distant when it might be required of me to make, in some way or other, a more decided and public acknowledgment of the Lord's goodness, and to show that it is my desire to prefer Jerusalem before my chief joy. He entered very kindly into feeling with me, and gave me some advice respecting my future movements. He also expressed his belief that the time might be very near when I should have the tongue loosened, and the ear fitted to receive my great Master's direction in this very important matter.

" *Tenth Month* 24*th.*—Monthly Meeting at Croydon.

" In the second meeting I apprehended it right for me to express an earnest and affectionate desire, that those present might be individually engaged to come up in the discharge of those duties which are allotted them in the ordering of the Great Head of the church; in doing which I was favoured with the reward of peace.

" O Lord, preserve me in thy fear, and enable me to live more and more to thy glory.

" *Eleventh Month* 3*rd.*—' If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.'—' Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.' How intimately is love to our Heavenly Father connected with love to all mankind! ' Thou shalt love the

Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbour as thyself.' Again, ' When a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.' And in the song of the angelic host, ' Glory to God in the highest,' was connected with ' peace on earth and good-will to men.'

" *Eleventh Month* 13*th.*—Took tea with J. F. M. In a religious opportunity afterwards, he observed that he believed it to be a very critical moment with me, and a time in which it is very needful to wait from morning to evening at wisdom's gate, listening to the voice of the true Shepherd, and endeavouring to distinguish it from the voice of the stranger: and urged the necessity of an entire resignation to the Lord's disposal, to the exclusion of all dependence on an arm of flesh.

" *Eleventh Month* 21*st.*—Attended Monthly Meeting at Wandsworth. The day was one which I desire to remember, as being not altogether an unprofitable one. In my solitary walk to meeting, I was favoured with some evidence of the continued regard of my Heavenly Father, and at different periods of the day was enabled to petition for ability to walk in the way of his requirings, and to live to the glory of his great name."

We are now approaching one of those periods so deeply touching and thrilling in the history of a school, when the rod of chastisement appears to be extended, and the hand of disease is permitted to be laid on many of the inmates. The commencement of this trying visitation is thus noticed :—

" *Twelfth Month* 7*th.*—F. S. [one of the boys], who has been ill about a week, is now in the nursery, and his com-

plaint is considered to be typhus fever. He did not appear to be so ill as to occasion much anxiety till the morning of the 4th. Our medical attendant then considered his complaint bilious fever, and expressed his apprehension that typhus would supervene. The doctor who has usually attended the family came from London to see him. Both he and our own medical men consider him dangerously ill; but we were somewhat encouraged to hope he may be permitted to get through.

"We have much cause for thankfulness that we have been so much favoured with health as a family for some time past; and, whatever may be the issue of this visitation, may the lesson of instruction which it is calculated to convey be sealed upon our minds. It is a memento of human frailty, which should lead to the adoption of the Psalmist's petition, 'Lord, so teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.'

"*Twelfth Month 8th.*—F. S. appears somewhat further improved. 'Surely the bitterness of death is past.' If this be our language, may it be accompanied with feelings of reverent thankfulness, and with the remembrance of the admonitory injunction, 'Be not high-minded, but fear.'

"At our preparative meeting to-day, Richard Barrett was very sweetly engaged to recommend the practice of daily retirement. This he believed would generally be found practicable, if opportunities were sought for, even by those whose time may be very fully taken up with other lawful engagements; and he queried whether the spiritual refreshment desired on these occasions, is not as needful for the nourishment of our souls, as outward food for the sustenance of the body. My heart could indeed say amen to this, from some little degree of precious experience: and I desire to be found more and more striving after the daily

performance of this religious duty, being convinced that much benefit would be found to result from it.

"*Twelfth Month* 14*th.*—Several of the boys appeared slightly indisposed, and suitable medicine and care were administered.

"*Twelfth Month* 17*th.*—W. B. and B. J. appeared to exhibit symptoms this afternoon, which, in the opinion of the medical attendants, rendered their removal from the house desirable. They were accordingly placed under the care of [a Friend] on Croydon Common.

"*Twelfth Month* 18*th.*—I went to London to summon the sub-committee, to take into consideration the state of the family. They met at three in the afternoon, and decided to issue a circular to the parents and friends of the children, informing them of the illness in the family, and leaving them at liberty to remove their children, should they feel inclined.

"Many of the children were taken home in the course of the next few days.

"*Twelfth Month* 23*rd.*—Poor little F. S. seems, after all, likely to sink, notwithstanding all the endeavours of the medical attendants to restore him.

"*Twelfth Month* 28*th.*—I was called at about three this morning, as F. S. appeared sinking. He had experienced much difficulty of breathing since twelve o'clock; this continued to the close, which took place at twenty minutes to six.

"I went to London to confer with his parents respecting the interment, which it is concluded shall take place on Second-day afternoon, at three o'clock.

"Dr. Hodgkin came again. He and our medical men united in taking an unfavourable view of W. B.'s case. B. J. appears recovering.

"*Twelfth Month* 30*th.*—The interment of the remains of F. S. took place this afternoon. A few Friends accompanied the bereaved family to the grave. In a solemn and interesting opportunity afterwards, Peter Bedford and Richard Barrett were engaged in handing a word of comfort and admonition; and before we separated, I felt constrained to address a few words to the bereaved mother, in doing which I was favoured with the reward of peace.

"*First Month* 1*st*, 1840.—In our sitting this morning, I ventured to draw the attention of the few boys who are left, to the mercy of our Heavenly Father in surrounding us with blessings, and permitting us to see the opening of another year. I also adverted to the circumstance of the removal of their late companion, as a fresh proof of the uncertainty of time, and a loud call to watchfulness and diligence in the pursuit of things that make for peace.

"In the evening I was sent for to the Common; but when I arrived there my feelings were much shocked on learning that W. B. was no more. The suddenness of his removal appears to have arisen from the rupture of a vessel in the head; but it is considered by our medical attendant that he could not have recovered from the other effects of the disorder.

"*First Month* 4*th.*—The remains of W. B. were consigned to the silent tomb. His father, who came alone, was much affected. A few Friends attended the corpse to the grave, and a comforting opportunity ensued, when our dear friends Peter Bedford and Richard Barrett were again engaged to impart counsel and encouragement.

"*Second Month* 10*th.*—I called on Richard Barrett, who is recovering from an attack of indisposition. In a religious opportunity we had together in the evening, he informed me that he had thought much of me during his late illness, and

desired I might be encouraged to run willingly, though tremblingly, in the way of the Lord's commandments. He also remarked, that an impression made on his mind three years ago in a similar interview was now renewed; namely, that the family of which I have in some measure the oversight will not circumscribe the field of religious labour and exercise. This, and more that he said, confirms the conviction of my own mind, that, wholly unworthy as I at times feel myself to be, the Lord Almighty, in his abundant mercy and goodness, does design to make use of me as an instrument of good in his hands. Oh that the work of the great Potter may not be marred upon the wheel! 'The Lord preserveth the simple;' was another passage R. B. quoted, and observed that it will not do for us to be too anxious, in the prospect of any religious engagement, as to our coming off well in the sight of our Heavenly Father and of our fellow-men; but let our dependence be simply and singly placed on our Divine Master. He also recommended that I should not be discouraged by my youth, if I had a word to offer at any time to an elder brother.

The family were favoured to re-assemble in usual health on the 19th of Second Month.

"*Third Month* 8*th*.—Preparative Meeting. Under an apprehension of duty, I took an opportunity, at the opening of the second meeting, of giving expression to some feelings that had pressed on my own mind with reference to the principal object of our meeting together on that occasion, namely, the consideration of our state as a religious body; and endeavoured to draw the attention of my friends to the high standard to which, as a church, we are called upon to aspire. (See Ephesians v. 25–27.) Much peace followed this

little act of submission to the requirings of apprehended duty.

"*Fourth Month* 19*th*.—'O send out thy light and thy truth; let them lead me—let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles!' This is often the petition of my heart. I long for an enlargement, and at times do feel somewhat of a desire that my great Master would call me into more active service; but oh that I may never presume to enter unbidden upon that work which can alone be acceptably engaged in as the qualification is renewed by the great Head of the Church. My progress, if I am making any, seems but very slow. May everything that hinders be removed out of the way! Oh that I may be as passive clay in the hands of the potter, willing to be anything or nothing in the sight of men! But, O Lord, be pleased still further to purify my heart, and cleanse it from every defilement; carry on the work of sanctification which thou hast in mercy begun, and grant that nothing may be suffered to remain which would obstruct the operations of thy grace and good Spirit, or hinder me from running in the way of thy commandments.

"*Fourth Month* 20*th*.—This morning, at about a quarter past seven, I received information of the addition to my family of another little girl.

"*Fifth Month* 9*th*.—Seventh-day evening. Nearly arrived at the close of another week, in which the things of time have engrossed much attention, and afforded but little opportunity for serious reflection. Oh that the one thing needful may be kept constantly in view, and the will of my Heavenly Father become more and more the governing principle of my conduct.

"*Fifth Month* 17*th*.—First-day. The usual time for holding the Yearly Meeting is once more at hand. Oh that it may

prove a season in which many may be stirred up to increased diligence in the all-important work of the soul's salvation; one which shall promote the edification of the body: and may I, and many more, know somewhat of an advancement in the right way, and a renewed dedication of our bodies and of our spirits to the Lord's service.

"May my dear brother and myself be permitted to take sweet counsel together, and encourage each other to faithfulness to our Divine Master in our respective allotments."

After the usual interesting digest of the proceedings of the Yearly Meeting, John Sharp thus takes a retrospect of it at its close:—

"*Sixth Month* 1*st*.—I have felt it a great privilege to be able to attend a part of the Yearly Meeting. It has been, I believe, a favoured season, in the experience of many. The business was conducted with much love and harmony, and the evidence was graciously permitted that, notwithstanding our degeneracy, we are not a forsaken people. There is in my mind a firm conviction that this Society has its peculiar allotment as a portion of the militant church, and that it will be made eminently instrumental in the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom, if its members are more and more individually concerned to follow the leadings of their Heavenly Guide, and thus live up to the profession they are making to the world; namely, that the immediate influence of the Holy Spirit should be the governing principle of our conduct.

"*Sixth Month* 13*th*.—Clothed with the 'spirit of heaviness.' Many causes conspire to produce this effect: an increasing sense of my own weakness; the pressure of my engagements allowing very little time for leisure and re-

tirement; and the prospect of a public examination, with a first-class considerably below par as to their attainments,—are among the chief.

"The first of these should lead me to the Strong for strength—to him who has promised to be strength in weakness. I have, at times, been favoured with an evidence that I am in my right allotment in remaining a member of this family; and therefore I desire to commit all to the care and keeping of the good Shepherd, and, trusting in his aid, to attempt with increased alacrity to run in the race set before me. The last is a temporary evil, and may end better than I dare to anticipate. The other is one that requires serious pondering, and scarcely any practicable remedy presents itself.

"In the very important station I now fill, it does seem indispensably necessary that more frequent opportunities of leisure should be afforded, both for private religious retirement, to seek for a renewal of strength myself; and for private individual intercourse with those placed under my care, both teachers and scholars. I see no means at present, however, of obtaining this; and also another desideratum—that of securing a more vigilant oversight of the junior teachers and scholars during school hours.

"*Sixth Month* 14*th*.—E. O. T. was at our meeting to-day, in the course of his visit to all the schools of Friends in Great Britain. He addressed the children after reading, and afterwards had an interview with the first class of boys.

"*Sixth Month* 15*th*.—Our dear friend E. O. T. engaged in his visit to our family. He sat with the remainder of the boys in four divisions, and with the girls in three. He was accompanied by P. B. and J. F. M.. They took tea at our house, and, a pause ensuing, E. O. T. addressed us somewhat to this effect:—

"'Very comforting is the assurance I feel that you two

have chosen the Lord for your portion ; it is an election you will never regret:' and, turning his attention to me, he proceeded in the language of encouragement, quoting the words addressed by the Almighty to Joshua: ' As the Lord was with Moses, so will he be with thee ; only be strong and of a good courage.'

Sixth Month 16*th.*—E. O. T. had an interview with the teachers on the boys' side, in which he was engaged to bring to our remembrance some solemn considerations, and to plead for an early and entire surrender to the divine disposal.

" *Sixth Month* 17*th.*—One observation of our dear friend E. O. T. particularly arrested my attention, and has been much with me since his visit. It was to this effect:—The more you are engaged to seek for yourselves to partake of the sweet waters (having alluded to the text, ' Can a fountain send forth,' &c.,) the more you will become the medium of refreshment to others.

" *Sixth Month* 26*th.*—Our annual examination took place and passed over more satisfactorily than I had expected. There is cause for thankfulness in recurring to this, after the many fears that previously abounded.

" *Sixth Month* 27*th.*—Our dear friend E. O. T. came to complete his religious engagement in this family. He had an interview with the orphan children—with the teachers—the boys and girls; and, in the afternoon, with myself. In sitting with me, he expressed the language of our Saviour: ' Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain.' He observed, that the necessary qualification for the important duties that devolve upon me in my present situation, is very little short of that which those have to receive, who are ordained to warn the people, and of whom it is said that, unless they are faithful, their blood will be required at the watchmen's hand. May his

labour of love, both in this family and elsewhere, be blessed by Him, in obedience to whom he has enlisted in this service.

"*Sixth Month* 28*th.*—Under a trembling sense of the continued goodness and mercy of our Heavenly Father, a lively desire is raised in my heart to be made more and more conformable to his holy will in all things; to run with diligence and alacrity the race set before me; and to seek in my daily conduct and conversation to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things. O Lord, help my feeble endeavours, and enable me to devote myself fully and unreservedly to thy service!"

In the Seventh Month John Sharp accompanied his wife and children to Brighton, where he left them for a few weeks, a change being recommended for their youngest daughter. They were favoured to return somewhat improved in health.

"*Ninth Month* 5*th.*—'For the ways of man are before the eyes of the Lord, and he pondereth all his goings.' What a powerful incentive to uprightness and integrity, could this text be constantly borne in mind!

"*Ninth Month* 12*th.*—Seventh-day evening. Arrived at the close of another week, I am desirous of availing myself of an opportunity of taking a retrospective view, not only of that which is now about to terminate, but also of many others which have rolled over my head, and for which (oh, awfully awakening consideration!) an account must be rendered at the tribunal of an omniscient Judge. Numberless indeed are the blessings that he has been pleased to shower down upon me; and numberless, too, are my sins of omission and commission. O for deliverance from the thraldom of sin, and a translation 'into the glorious liberty of the children of

God.' How great are the privileges of those who are the children of God by adoption. How unspeakably important that we should neither give sleep to our eyes, nor slumber to our eyelids, till our hearts have become 'an habitation for the mighty God of Jacob.' Do I know anything of this blessed experience? Alas, how little! Have I even attained to the stature of a *babe* in Christ? If, through the merciful visitations of the Holy Spirit, something has been known of a deliverance from the bondage of corruption, how tardy has been my progress, and how applicable to me is the language addressed to some formerly: 'When for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God, and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.' O thou bountiful Giver of every good and perfect gift, be pleased to strengthen the things that remain, that appear ready to die; and if there be still a little life, grant that by a faithful abiding in the living Vine, somewhat may yet be known of a growth and increase, even to the bearing of much fruit, by which thy ever-excellent name may be glorified.

"*Tenth Month 3rd.*—Croydon Fair. I have been looking forward to this time with an apprehension that it would be right for me to go and distribute some tracts at the entrance of the fair. In the afternoon and evening accordingly I took my stand at the principal entrance, and distributed about 1400. Most of them were well received; and I returned home with the feelings of one somewhat relieved from a burden, and with a grateful sense of the mercy of my Heavenly Father in making hard things easy; for the prospect of thus exposing myself was humiliating; but every discouragement was removed when the time for performing this little service came.

"*Eleventh Month 7th*:—

"'What various hindrances we meet,
In coming to a mercy-seat;
Yet who that knows the worth of prayer,
But wishes to be often there!'

"Truly this is verified in my experience; yet the desire of my soul may be expressed by another verse:—

"'O for a closer walk with God,
A calm and heavenly frame;
A light to shine upon the road
That leads me to the Lamb!'

"O Lord, permit me at this time to return thee thanks for thy multiplied mercies; and especially for the partial restoration to health of my beloved partner. O be pleased still to be near us both, and enable us increasingly and unitedly to run in the way of thy commandments.

"*Eleventh Month 10th*:—

"'Let love through all your actions run,
And all your words be mild.'

"These two lines of one of Watts' hymns, which my dear little M. H. has lately learned, seem fraught with instruction, and appear very appropriate as a watchword to myself. Oh that *love* for those who are placed under my care may be increasingly and conspicuously the regulating principle of my conduct towards them, and indeed towards all with whom I may have anything to do.

"*Twelfth Month 15th*.—Engaged in taking a little review of the goodness of the Almighty: it is well to be thus occupied.

"'When all thy mercies, O my God,
My rising soul surveys,
Transported with the view, I'm lost
In wonder, love and praise.'

Oh that the remembrance of these manifold mercies may quicken and animate the mind, and stir up to increased devotedness! When a glimpse is sometimes afforded of the extent of the divine requirings, as set forth in the example of our adorable Redeemer, how is the heart humbled under a sense of its weakness and sinfulness! 'I have seen an end of all perfection; but thy commandment is exceeding broad.' Here, however, is no cause for discouragement; we are not sent on the warfare at our own charges. Help is laid on One that is mighty, and he is ever willing to grant that aid by which alone the victory can be gained. While insufficient of ourselves for any good word or work, we may consolingly remember the testimony of the apostle: 'I can do *all* things through Christ which strengtheneth me.' How gracious are the dealings of our Heavenly Father with his frail, dependent followers: 'if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.' Oh that there may be, in my beloved partner and myself, an increase of willingness to be formed and fashioned according to the good pleasure of him, who is 'wonderful in counsel and excellent in working!'

"O Lord, give us increasingly to know a being resigned in all things to thy holy will; enable us to become as clay, and be thou our Potter; be pleased mercifully to regard us, and lead us along step by step in the way in which thou wouldst have us to go. And, O merciful Father, do thou regard with tender compassion our beloved children: suffer them not to become the prey of the devourer; but bless our feeble endeavours to train them up in thy nurture and admonition; and give us increasingly to partake of that wisdom that is profitable to direct in this important and interesting engagement.

"*Twelfth Month* 31*st*.—In the evening I collected the boys together, and endeavoured to draw their attention to some considerations of the highest importance, particularly referring to the near approach of the termination of another year, and to the illness with which we were visited this time last year. A solemn covering prevailed, and the boys appeared to listen with much attention to the remarks made, and were particularly quiet on retiring to rest. My own feelings were peaceful: may this favour prove an encouragement to further dedication, and to the faithful performance of everything that may be required at my hands by the great Master.

CHAPTER VII.

1841—42. Æt. 28—30.

EXTRACTS FROM JOURNAL—ILLNESS OF HIS LITTLE GIRL—VISIT TO A FRIEND—ILLNESS IN THE SCHOOL, AND DEATH OF ONE OF THE BOYS—YEARLY MEETING—APPOINTED SUPERINTENDENT—DECEASE OF HIS BROTHER'S WIFE—CONFERENCE AT ACKWORTH—QUARTERLY MEETING.

Perhaps there is no secular engagement which requires a greater variety of talent, or a larger measure of qualification from above, than that of an instructor of youth. Peculiar natural endowments, and the heavenly panoply of "the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left," especially characterize those who, in the highest sense, may be called successful teachers. It is, however, but too rarely that individuals thus gifted are willing to devote themselves to an engagement which involves a large amount of self-denial, and an exercise of patience and other Christian virtues to an unusual extent. It was evident to those most intimately acquainted with John Sharp, that he was possessed of many of the qualifications just alluded to; and it will have been seen, that, whilst often humbled under a sense of his own insufficiency, he was by no means inclined to take a low view of the requirements of his vocation, or to under-rate the responsibilities of

the position he occupied. Sedulous in his endeavours to improve his natural talents, and earnest and frequent in his applications at the throne of grace, he was favoured with an amount of success not often attained, both as regarded his outward and his religious qualifications. Whilst, however, this was the case, none could be more ready than himself to attribute all to the blessing of him from whom cometh every good and perfect gift.

"*First Month* 30*th*.—Seventh-day evening. Arrived at the close of another week, and very nearly to that of the first month in the new year. It is not enough for us to number our days, if we do not also apply our hearts unto wisdom. Oh that this may increasingly be our experience! and as the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, may it be more and more our united endeavour to pass the time of our sojourning here in fear, redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

"*Second Month* 20*th*.—'My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up.' Oh that this may become increasingly my daily experience! How slow are we in seeking to avail ourselves of our greatest privileges. Can there be one that may be placed in comparison with the gracious invitation to hold communion with our Maker? That he who inhabiteth eternity—whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain—should condescend thus graciously to regard so unworthy a creature as erring, finite, and oft-times disobedient and rebellious man, is indeed a theme worthy of devout meditation and reverent gratitude: and yet how reluctant are we to accept the gracious offers of his love, and how prone to make excuses, instead of engaging heartily in his service.

"*Fourth Month 3rd.*—Although not much has been recorded during the last three months respecting my spiritual state, there have been during that time some favoured seasons, in which a portion of that peace which passeth all understanding has been preciously experienced. Nevertheless I have deeply to lament that my growth is slow. O, thou who hast thus far condescended to be my helper, and hast manifested thy loving-kindness in so many ways to me, a poor unworthy creature, be pleased still to regard me with tender compassion; carry on the work of grace which thou hast been mercifully pleased to begin in my soul; suffer not the enemy of all good to entrap me in any of his snares. Unite my beloved partner and myself more closely than ever in thy fear, and in the reverent desire to serve thee better and to love thee more; and grant that thy choicest blessings may rest on our beloved children; enable us to train them up in thy nurture and admonition, and be thou graciously pleased to preserve them as in the hollow of thy hand; and if they are permitted to attain to years of discretion, draw them, O Lord, by the cords of thy love, and incline them to make an early and entire surrender of their whole heart to thy will and service. I ask not earthly treasures for them, but keep them in thy fear. Thus, O Lord, do I desire to commend them, with myself and beloved partner, to thy gracious care and keeping. Preserve us in humility and in reverent dependence on thee for the supply of all our wants, and enable us from day to day to obey the apostolic injunction: 'See that ye walk circumspectly; not as fools, but as wise: redeeming the time, because the days are evil.'"

In the Seventh Month of this year, during the school vacation, John Sharp and his family spent some

time at Margate, with the view of obtaining change of air for the children. While there he writes :—

" *Seventh Month 8th.*—We all had a very pleasant ride to the North Foreland lighthouse. It is an octagonal building, sixty-five feet high, ascended by eighty-five steps, and surmounted by a lantern, in which the lights are reflected by eighteen silvered mirrors, each twenty inches in diameter. The lights are kept burning from sunset to daylight, and are visible at the Nore, a distance of thirty miles.

In noticing their return to the school on the 30th of Seventh Month, he alludes to a subject which now began to cause considerable anxiety,—the serious illness of their eldest little girl. The feelings of the parent on such an occasion were fully realized; yet was there also the desire to leave the issue in the hands of a merciful Creator.

" *Eighth Month 1st.*—Our dear M. H. is very much reduced, and appears no better.

" O Lord, be pleased to look down upon us with tender compassion, and grant, if it please thee, that the means used for her recovery may be blessed with the desired effect; but should it please thee to take to thyself this precious pledge of our love, grant that resignation to thy holy will may be the covering of our minds.

" *Eighth Month 15th.*—A day of heavenly favour. I feel it to be great cause for thankfulness that my mind is supported in patience and resignation to the divine will, with reference to our dear M. H.'s restoration to health. May it become increasingly our desire, individually and unitedly, to commit all to the keeping of our merciful Father in heaven, and to receive whatever he may see meet to dispense with entire resignation to his holy will.

"*Eighth Month* 23*rd*.—Yesterday was the fourth anniversary of our marriage.

"I trust it has not passed over without some grateful remembrance of the many mercies which we have been permitted to receive, and some desires for an increase of love and gratitude to the Giver of all good. May this be increasingly evinced by a willingness to be entirely given up to the divine disposal in all things.

"*Ninth Month* 1*st*.—For some days our dear M. H. has declined more rapidly; last night she appeared in a sinking state, and we felt some doubt whether she would survive till morning.

"On going to meeting this morning, the language of Jairus (so applicable to our present circumstances) was much impressed on my mind, to this effect: 'My little daughter lieth at the point of death; but come and lay thy hands on her, and she shall live.' (See Mark v.) This was attended with a sense of the omnipotence of him who was pleased to restore the daughter of Jairus, and the consideration that he still possesses the power to heal and to restore. There was also permitted a feeling of entire resignation to the divine will as regards our dear M. H., and the earnest prayer, that, whether she be taken now, or spared to us a little longer, it might be for the glory of our Heavenly Father."

After several fluctuations in her disorder, it was thought best to try the effect of change of air, and lodgings were engaged in Reigate for this purpose. Under the divine blessing, this was permitted to answer her anxious parents' wishes; and we find the following entry after her return:—

"*Tenth Month* 19*th*.—Since returning to Croydon our dear M. H. appears to have gained ground. May gratitude

to the Great Physician fill our hearts, and may it be our earnest desire and faithful endeavour to train her up (should her life be spared) in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

"*Eleventh Month* 16*th.*—This morning I was informed of the birth of a son. My dear H. and little one have been favoured to go on well thus far; for which, I think I may say, gratitude is the clothing of my mind to the Author of every blessing.

"*Twelfth Month* 13*th.*—Somewhat discouraged under a sense of the slowness of my progress in the heavenward journey, and the want of zeal and alacrity to run in the way of the Lord's commandments.

"'Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me; and lead me in the way everlasting.'

"*Twelfth Month* 14*th.*—In taking a little review of the past, and endeavouring to enter upon an examination of my present position,—as a member of the human family, created by an all-wise, almighty, and beneficent Being, for a purpose of his own glory,—as a husband,—as a father,—as a master,—as an instructor of youth,—as a member of the militant church,—(though but a babe, when I ought to have attained the stature of a perfect man,)—I find much cause for self-abasement and deep humiliation, under a sense of my short-coming, and the necessity to cry to him, who sees and knows all our thoughts, words and actions, and to whom we shall have to give an account for every secret thing,—'Help, Lord, or I perish.'

"*Twelfth Month* 17*th.*—Was struck with a passage on which my eye was unexpectedly cast in John Churchman's Journal, to this effect:—'There is a time to bud, a time to blossom, a time for the fruit to set and appear, and a time

for it to ripen.' Oh that in due season I may be favoured to become a fruit-bearing branch in the 'true vine!'

"*First Month* 1*st*, 1842.—In taking a retrospect of my past life, my heart was humbled, and my spirit contrited, in the remembrance of the goodness of my Heavenly Father, in visiting and re-visiting my soul with the gracious assurance of his tender regard. This contrition is a favour for which I desire to be thankful.

"Be thou pleased, O Lord, to bestow more largely of thy grace, and enable me to dedicate all that thou hast given me to thy blessed service. Oh, that thou mayst regard with tender compassion and forgiveness (for the sake of thy dear Son) my many short-comings and sins of omission and commission; and preserve me in a state of reverent waiting and of filial dependence on thee, that I may know thy holy will concerning me, and be strengthened to fulfil it.

"Grant, if it please thee, O Heavenly Father, some enlargement of service in thy church, and in this family. O, enable me to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called, and to set an example to those who are around me, and those who are placed under my care, which they may safely follow.

"O grant that an increase of love may be reciprocally known among the various members of this family towards thee, and to each other; and be pleased to bring the 'lambs' more and more under the softening impressions of thy Holy Spirit.

"*Second Month 7th.*—On the 4th instant I attained the age of thirty years. This is a period to which I have for some time looked forward, under an apprehension that some increase of active service in the Lord's vineyard may devolve upon me, if obedient to the gentle leadings and intimations of his Holy Spirit. Carry on, O Lord, the work which thou

hast in mercy begun in my soul. Be pleased to sanctify and cleanse my heart by the purifying operations of thy all-sufficient grace. Grant that, in simple dependence upon thy holy aid, I may follow thee so fully and unreservedly, that I may be enabled to adopt the language: 'With my whole heart have I sought thee. O let me not wander from thy commandments.'

"*Second Month* 10*th*.—I paid a visit to [a Friend]. I had for some time apprehended that it would be right for me to give up to an intimation of duty to go and see this individual. On my way thither, under a fresh sense of my own weakness, and the necessity of placing my dependence on the All-sufficient Helper, my cries were to him for ability to serve him faithfully in this little requiring. A private interview was sought and obtained, in which I informed the Friend, that, under a feeling of gospel love, and with the apprehension that I was in the way of my duty, I had been induced to visit him, and desired to urge upon him the necessity of an honest, heart-searching examination, that he might see whether there was anything that stands in the way of his acceptance, should the undeniable messenger be sent this day to summon him to give up his account; reminding him that, in the ordinary course of events, the time could not be very far distant, and might be very near, when the things of time would recede from his view, and appear in his estimation lighter than feather. The desire of my heart was that he might be engaged honestly and sincerely to adopt the language, 'Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.'

"The communication was well received, and the visit acknowledged as an act of kindness; whether any good may

result to the visited, I know not; but feel thankful to my Heavenly Father for having enabled me to discharge this little debt of love to the relief of my own mind. Oh that I may be entirely given up to serve him in all things; daily, and oftener than the day, seeking to know his holy will, and imploring his divine aid, that so I may be enabled to accomplish all that he may call for at my hands."

On the 13th, John Sharp records the commencement of an attack of illness among the boys, which proved to be scarlatina. Most of those who sickened with the complaint had it in a very mild form; but in one case it proved fatal. Referring to this he writes:—

"*Third Month 4th.*—W. M. appeared very ill, and his mother arrived about two o'clock: there were no symptoms, however, indicative of a fatal termination of the complaint, and he continued without any material change till about a quarter to seven o'clock, when an alteration was observed in his breathing, and in a few minutes his illness was terminated by death. This unexpected event was a great shock to us all. The sudden change appears to have arisen from an effusion of water on the chest.

"*Third Month 27th.*—B. S. visited our meeting. In a striking and solemn address in the morning, the careless and unconcerned received an arousing call to betake themselves in good earnest to the all-important work of the soul's salvation. Encouragement was handed forth to those who have in some degree yielded to the calls and invitations of the Holy Spirit; they were reminded that whilst it is good to be zealously affected in a good cause, there was a necessity for considering, in every such case, whether it was in the line of their individual duty; and some of the youth especially were cautioned against 'making more haste than good

speed;' lest, instead of resembling the oak of the forest, which was of slow growth, yet firm in its texture, and capable of resisting the blast from the wilderness, they might be compared to the delicate hothouse plant, which, though brought to an early maturity, had not strength to withstand the summer's sun or the winter's cold."

During the ensuing Yearly Meeting, we find the following record of an address delivered at one of the sittings:—

"*Fifth Month* 19*th.*—William Forster commenced a very impressive communication by speaking of 'the intrinsic excellence, the preciousness, the very blessedness of truth'—the sons of God are the children of truth—those who are born again experience this all-important change of heart by the operations of the Spirit of Truth. He also alluded to the devotedness of the early professors of Christianity, who were emphatically men of truth; to the long and grievous night of apostacy that succeeded the age in which they lived; and to the renewed extension of the Lord's power in the gathering of our religious Society. He spoke much of the steadfastness and the truthfulness maintained by the early members of it, and their opposition to everything that was not of the truth, and had its origin in deceit; that they were indeed a truth-speaking people, and that their love of the truth led them to endure all that contempt and opposition that befel them in consequence of their refusal to conform to the corrupt and idolatrous practices and modes of speech prevalent in their day, and (sad to say) continued in use to the present time. He alluded also to the divine support by which they were mercifully sustained in their manifold trials, and continued to this effect:—'I claim not great things for myself, my brethren; but I think it is not

altogether of myself that I am thus made bold to call upon you, as I think I feel warranted in doing, to give God thanks for the marvellous display of his light, and of his power, and of his love in the days of our forefathers. O they did indeed know the Lord to come to Zion, and to return to Jerusalem; for he was in the midst of them, and among them; and they came to the very life and substance of the thing; they knew what it was to be brought into the experience of the one baptism by which they were baptised into one body.' He also spoke much of the fear of God as the regulating principle of their conduct;—an awful, inward, reverential fear, which is too much wanting among us, both older and younger, in the present day."

About this time it became evident that a very considerable change must ere long take place in the management of the Institution. The health of the beloved superintendent was so seriously affected, that prudence appeared to dictate retirement from a post in which there must ever be no small amount of labour and anxiety. Some of the teachers, also, in the girls' department, were intending to leave. Alluding to these prospective changes, John Sharp observes :—

"*Fifth Month* 29*th*.—The present is a time of no little exercise of mind with some of us, who have long been closely connected with this establishment. Under our present circumstances it is my earnest desire that those arrangements may be made for the government and management of the institution that may conduce to its best interests, whether it may be my lot to continue here or not. I feel that it is not for me to sever the tie by which I have so long been connected with it; and I have also an humble

trust that, if I should be liberated from my engagements here by any decision of the committee, I shall still be mercifully cared for by him who has, I may thankfully acknowledge, condescended to be with me all my life long. Oh that neither height nor depth, principalities nor powers, things present nor things to come, or life, or death, or any other creature, may ever be able to separate me from his love in Christ Jesus our Lord; but may my beloved partner and myself be fully and unreservedly devoted to his service, and then, I doubt not, we shall receive a blessed reward.

"*Sixth Month* 10*th*.—E. B. addressed a letter to the sub-committee, in which she requested to be liberated from her engagement as superintendent of this institution.

"*Sixth Month* 17*th*.—A special committee was held in London. E. B.'s resignation of her office of superintendent was accepted; and the offer of the services of my dear H. and myself having been made through our friends I. K. and P. B., the same were agreed to after full consideration.

"This, we are sensible, is no light undertaking; but we feel satisfied that it is right thus to place ourselves at the committee's disposal. May he, whose tender mercies I have indeed abundant cause to commemorate, be graciously pleased to preserve us in his fear, and enable us to look with a single eye to his glory, and in all our movements to cherish a childlike teachable disposition, and maintain a simple dependence on his divine guidance.

"*Sixth Month* 26*th*.—In the prospect of new and arduous duties likely to devolve on me as the superintendent of the Institution, my cry has been this day to the Almighty, 'Thou hast been my help; leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation.'"

Previously to undertaking their responsible position, John Sharp and his wife spent a little time with their

relatives in the North of England. H. S. went first to Carlisle with the children.

In a letter addressed to his wife during this period of her absence, he thus describes the great importance attaching, in his view, to their anticipated change of situation :—

" *Seventh Month* 10*th*, 1842.—Various have been the exercises of my mind in the prospect of entering upon the weighty and important engagement to which we have been appointed by the Committee; at times hope preponderates; at others, discouragements abound; but, through all, the unwavering persuasion that it is the place allotted us in the ordering of best Wisdom is a source of encouragement to trust in him, whose compassions fail not, and whose tender mercies are over all his works.

" I doubt not that thou too hast deeply pondered this interesting subject—perhaps with equally mingled feelings; let us fully and freely unbosom our thoughts to each other, and humbly cast our care on him, who has graciously cared for us, and will, I doubt not, continue to strengthen and support us, if humbly endeavouring, in dependence on his divine aid, to walk acceptably before him. We must be prepared to go through evil report and good report: great will be the necessity to seek with a single eye to our divine Master for ability to follow the injunction, ' Be ye wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.'

" We must be prepared for difficulties; but I have some faith to believe that he, to whom all power in heaven and on earth is committed, will bring us safely through all, if we abide in his fear, and seek in all things the promotion of his glory. This is truly a high attainment; but ' is anything too hard for the Lord ?' who requires nothing at the hands of any without giving them ability to obey his commands.

Two passages of Sacred Writ have been to me the means of strength and encouragement. The first is an acknowledgment of past favour, and a petition for future guardianship, which I have been mercifully enabled to adopt: 'Thou hast been my help; leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation.' The other is a promise sweetly brought to remembrance, of so comprehensive a character, that it may well excite to increased dedication, and encourage to continued perseverance in the way of well-doing: 'The Lord will give grace and glory; no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.'"

On his way to rejoin his wife, John Sharp paid a visit to the school at Rawden, and afterwards attended the General Meeting at Ackworth. Whilst there he heard of the very serious illness of his sister-in-law at North Shields. Proceeding to Carlisle, he returned with his wife and children, after a few days, to Darlington. From hence they went on the 26th of Seventh Month to Ayton, to attend the first General Meeting of the school there. Though much interested with the examination, John Sharp remarks, "to me a shade was cast over all the proceedings of the day from the absence of my dear brother, who would, if present, have acted as secretary, and taken an active part in the business of the General Meeting.

"*Seventh Month* 27*th*.—We received a few lines to-day from our beloved brother, informing us that his precious partner has at length received the summons to her eternal home. This result we were prepared to anticipate, from the accounts we have daily received during the past week. My dear brother appears to be mercifully supported under this

affecting bereavement, and there is sweet consolation in the undoubting belief that our beloved sister has entered upon a scene of everlasting and unalloyed happiness.

" *Seventh Month* 29*th.*—In the afternoon I left Darlington for North Shields. On my arrival I was much overcome on meeting my dear brother, and could not restrain my tears. He was very calm and resigned, and it was truly instructive to witness the power of religion to support and sustain in the hour of affliction.

" *Seventh Month* 31*st.*—The day of our beloved sister's interment. At about ten the near relatives assembled, and followed the remains of the dear departed to the grave. There was a short time of solemn silence, and we then withdrew to the meeting-house, where Rachel Priestman addressed us, commencing thus:—' The Christian cannot sigh for those who have arrived at their desired haven, and are landed on the heavenly shore; but he does weep when he considers his own infirmities and short-comings, and his many omissions of duty; he weeps also for the world around him, which still lieth in wickedness; and he is also permitted to weep for those in whose social circle there is felt to be a chasm indeed.' George Richardson was afterwards engaged in earnest exhortation, and also in prayer, in the course of which he strikingly alluded to the frailty of man and the uncertainty of his continuance here; referring also to the awful period when the heaven shall be as a scroll when it is rolled together, and when the elements shall melt with fervent heat, &c.

A large company sat down with us to tea, after which George Richardson read some interesting papers. Solemn silence ensued, and a beloved friend present was engaged to address the company, and particularly the youthful relatives, in the language of exhortation and encouragement.

"*Eighth Month* 1*st*.—Took leave of my dear bereaved brother early in the morning, much comforted with having been with him, and with desires for his continued support and resignation to the divine disposal in all things.

"*Eighth Month* 2*nd*.—Reached Croydon this morning, and were favoured to find all well at the school.

"*Eighth Month* 21*st*.—'Establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands, establish thou it.' These expressions of the Psalmist have rested on my mind, in connexion with the important care that is about to devolve upon us, in undertaking the superintendence of this institution. May we be enabled fully to adopt the petition, by so walking humbly and reverently before the Lord, as to undertake nothing but what is marked with his sanction and approval. The belief, that our having accepted this very important charge is in accordance with his holy will concerning us, does strengthen and encourage us to cast our care upon him. May we ever be preserved in humility and watchfulness, and in childlike dependence on our Heavenly Guide."

On the 24th John Sharp and his wife entered on their duties as superintendents.

"*Eighth Month* 31*st*.—We have now been one week in our new and important position in this family, and have been enabled thus far to get on better than we could have anticipated. We are becoming accustomed to our respective duties, and have at times been permitted to enjoy a peaceful feeling, which we are willing to accept as a little evidence that we are in our right allotment.

"May it be our earnest and continual desire to be faithful in the discharge of every duty that may devolve upon us, and very watchful in order that we may observe the point-

ings of the Master's finger: and when our Holy Head is pleased to manifest in any way his will concerning us, may we simply follow his divine guidance, and depend upon him day by day for the supply of our spiritual need.

"*Tenth Month* 23*rd*.—O for strength to break through every obstacle, and to repair daily, and oftener than the returning day, to the watch-tower. I have been favoured this day with some earnest desires for a closer walk with God. Cleanse thou me from secret faults, has been my petition, and purify my soul, even if it be with the refiner's fire or fuller's soap. I long to be prepared, by the operation of the Lord's power, to stand in that allotment in the church which I have long believed it is the gracious will of my divine Master I should fill; but there is yet much to be removed, and I desire that the cry may not cease to ascend, 'Lord, let not thine eye pity, nor thy hand spare, till thou hast made me what thou wouldst have me to be.'

"*Tenth Month* 28*th*.—A Committee was appointed at our last Monthly Meeting to visit the families of Friends, and present them with copies of a minute of advice issued by the Yearly Meeting, on the right training of children and youth.

"Six Friends called this morning, and paid an acceptable visit. After they had sat with ourselves first, and afterwards with the teachers, I felt constrained to tell them it was comforting to me to be sensible of a desire on their part, to cherish a lively exercise of spirit on our behalf, and on behalf of this family generally. I was favoured with a feeling of peace in giving up to express these few words. May there be an increased willingness to obey even the gentlest intimations of the divine will."

In the Eleventh Month John Sharp attended a Conference held at Ackworth, consisting chiefly of

Friends deputed by the committees of the public schools, to enquire into various points affecting the interests and success of these establishments. The results were afterwards published, and, it is believed, were of considerable value to those engaged in conducting our schools; while the meeting of a number of Friends interested in the subject, and their free interchange of opinion and communication of experience, could not fail to be of service to the cause of education in the Society.

"*Twelfth Month 6th.*—I have found very little time, during the last few weeks, for that private retirement which is so essential to an advancement in the right way. My engagements at times press heavily upon me: may I strive increasingly to break through all, and repair daily, and oftener than the return of day, to the inexhaustible Fountain, for the supply of my spiritual necessities.

"*Twelfth Month 27th.* — At the Quarterly Meeting, M. A. B. was engaged in testimony, commencing with the language, — 'Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord.' She intimated that many had been mercifully taken 'from the evil days that are, and the more evil days that are coming, to try those that dwell on the earth.' Her communication was chiefly in connexion with the injunction,—'Put off, therefore, the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.' She said that it was because it was so much in the cross to our natural inclination to put off the old man, that so many, by a mere profession of religion, were endeavouring to put the new man over it. This she compared to putting a piece of new cloth to an old garment, and putting the new wine of

the kingdom into old bottles. In allusion to the pursuit of riches she queried, What will it avail any—what has it availed many—to labour from morning to night, to pass their days in anxiety and their nights in sleeplessness, that they may heap thousands upon thousands, adding house to house and field to field; since the day is coming, when, naked as they came into this world, so will they go out of it? For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.

"J. J. Gurney also addressed the meeting. His communication was chiefly to those with whom it might be the eleventh hour, and who were yet the servants of sin; intimating that some then present were pursuing the downward course, and proclaiming to these the renewed offers of pardoning mercy, if they would sincerely repent. 'Vain,' said he, 'is the attempt to serve God and Belial—that false god of sinful pleasure, before whose odious image some in this company do bow night and day.' "

CHAPTER VIII.

1843—44. ÆT. 30—32.

JOHN SHARP SPEAKS IN MEETING AS A MINISTER—DECEASE OF HIS BROTHER—VISIT TO DOVER, ETC.—DEATH OF M. A. NAPPER—ANNIVERSARIES—LETTER TO A YOUNG FRIEND.

"*First Month* 1*st*, 1843.—This day is the commencement of another week, month and year. In the early part of it my portion was the spirit of heaviness: there was a little season of brightness, however, in the morning, when I collected the older boys together, and reminded them of the rapid flight of time, its uncertainty, and the necessity of giving diligent attention to those things that make for peace. In the remembrance of past mercies I can indeed adopt the language,—Many, O Lord, my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to us-ward; they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee; if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered. May the inquiry be made, with the earnest desire to be found in the way of obedience—What shall I render unto thee, O Lord, for all thy benefits towards me?

"*First Month* 26*th*.—This morning the addition was made to our family of a little girl, and my heart was made thankful for the safety of my beloved H., who appears to be going on quite as well, perhaps better, than on any former occasion. May these precious little treasures, if permitted to attain to years of discretion, become faithful and devoted followers of the crucified Immanuel!

"*First Month* 29*th*.—A memorable day. In the morning a solemn covering appeared to be over the meeting, under which a Friend said a few words, and J. F. M. was afterwards engaged in testimony at some length, in the course of which he had to tell of the precious sense of the divine presence with which he had been favoured in that meeting. My portion throughout was peaceful poverty. In the afternoon I went to meeting without any expectation that my mouth would soon be opened in a meeting for worship. J. B. said that his mind had been under unusual exercise on behalf of some, who would, he believed, well understand the language, 'Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee,' &c., reviving the admonitory language, 'Hold fast that which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.' He finished by repeating the language formerly addressed to Levi: 'Let thy Urim and thy Thummim be with thy holy one,' &c. Joseph Storrs and J. F. M. afterwards spoke for a short time; the latter repeating the language already referred to, 'Hold fast,' &c.

"After J. B. had resumed his seat, I was impressed (under a feeling of much tenderness) with an apprehension that a few words, which were presented to my mind, were to be expressed in that meeting; and before we separated, I was enabled with much calmness, and in an audible manner, to speak as follows:—'Have not some of us, dear friends, been this day favoured with a renewed evidence, that the Lord hath not forgotten to be gracious; that He hath not in anger shut up his tender mercies; but that, like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord still pitieth them that fear him; that his hand is still stretched out to help, and his ear open to receive the cry of his dependent little ones? May the inquiry be afresh raised, in grateful remembrance of the merciful dealings of the Most High with us, What

shall I render unto thee, O Lord, for all thy benefits?' A peaceful calm ensued, which has remained with me, and induces the humble trust that the Lord has been graciously pleased to accept this little offering; and the desire of my heart is, that he who has been with me all my life long, and has enabled me at length thus to put the hand to the plough, will preserve me hereafter from looking back.

"*Second Month 4th.*—The return of the anniversary of one's birth seems one of those occasions in which a review of the past is peculiarly appropriate. I have now completed my thirty-first year, and truly I have abundant cause to recount the mercies of my Heavenly Father, and to ascribe to him the tribute of thanksgiving and praise, which are indeed due to his ever-excellent name. Oh that it may be increasingly my earnest desire and sincere endeavour to love him more and to serve him better; but to do this, how needful it is that I should day by day seek from him the supply of that wisdom which is profitable to direct, and which he is graciously pleased to bestow upon all men liberally, as they are sensible of their need. Since my last birthday, the superintendence of this large and interesting family has more fully devolved upon me. Oh for an increase of watchfulness and of faithfulness in the discharge of my duty, to every member of it! 'I can of myself do nothing.' Be pleased, then, O thou all-merciful Father, to give me day by day my daily bread; enable me simply to follow as thou art pleased to lead; grant that by keeping the eye singly fixed on thee, I may be favoured to experience the whole body to be full of light. And as regards that particular field of labour, into which I have long believed that it was thy gracious design to call me, and bid me work: O be thou pleased to go before me, and suffer me not to lose sight of thee; if thou seest me flagging on my way, extend, O most merciful

Saviour, the crook of thy love; and if I should go on without thy bidding, be pleased to grant the restraining influence of thy grace. Let not my feet wander from thy fold; and O preserve me alike from looking back, and from feeling any anxiety about the future; but may I rather endeavour to live one day at a time, taking no thought for the morrow, but trusting in thee, and looking daily to thee for the supply of all my need.

"*Second Month 5th.*—In the three meetings I have attended since I apprehended it right to express a few words, my mind has appeared quite shut up as respects any further communication. May I be engaged to wait in patience for the putting forth of the good Shepherd, should he see meet to require any further service of this kind at my hands. I earnestly wish to be preserved from looking unprofitably either backward or forward, and the prevailing desire of my heart at the present time may be expressed in the language of the Psalmist,—'Lord cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me; restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with thy free spirit; then will I teach transgressors thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto thee.'

"*Second Month 11th.*—'I am poor and needy; yet the Lord thinketh upon me.' When made sensible of weakness and poverty, how cheering is this record of David's experience. Many indeed are the promises to the poor in spirit: they are pronounced blessed by our adorable Redeemer in his sermon on the mount; and the evangelical prophet has recorded this promise in the name of Jehovah:—'When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I, the Lord, will hear them; I, the God of Israel, will not forsake them,' &c.

"*Second Month 14th.*—'The righteous shall hold on his

way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger.' O, then, for clean hands, and a clean heart; for it is also recorded as an answer to the inquiry, 'Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord, and who shall stand in his holy place?' 'He that hath clean hands and a pure heart:' and again, 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.'

"*Second Month 25th.*—During the past week we have had two boys seriously ill, and at one time our apprehensions were excited that we were about to be again tried with an epidemic in the school. This involved us in much anxiety; but we now cherish the hope that we shall be spared this trial. May the shaking of the rod, if this visitation may be regarded in this light, so humble us, that we may be spared the severity of its stroke.

"My dear brother George is now on a sick bed at the house of our dear elder brother at Darlington, without any prospect of recovery. In how short a time has he been thus prostrated! His intervals of entire consciousness are few. Grant, O most merciful God, before he receive the final summons, whether the time may be at hand or at a later period, that, through the efficacy of our blessed Saviour's atoning blood, he may be favoured to experience pardon, peace and reconciliation with thee, being brought into a state of true repentance towards thee, and faith toward our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. And for myself, O Lord, be pleased to accept the earnest petition, that thou wilt enable me to retain my confidence in thee, and (under a sense of much weakness and of the power of the unwearied adversary,) to cry availingly, 'Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe.' Be pleased to preserve me on the right hand and on the left, and cause me to know the way in which thou wouldst

have me to walk; for I do endeavour to lift up my soul unto thee.

"My beloved partner resumed her accustomed place in our circle on the 23rd, and our dear children are all pretty well. Grant, Lord, that we may be so careful to attend to the injunction to train them up in the way in which they should go, that, should they be spared to attain to maturity, they may not depart from it. Take them, O Lord, under thy blessed protection and guidance, and fit them in some way for usefulness in thy militant church. O be pleased to make them, even in early life, of the number of thy lambs, and grant that they may never renounce their allegiance to thee, as their Leader and Commander.

"And not only for ourselves and our dear children do I feel emboldened to petition, but for all the teachers, and for all the children; that we may increasingly become a united family of love, daily seeking supplies of heavenly grace from thee, the inexhaustible Fountain, and drawing nearer and nearer to each other, as we are brought into closer union with thee.

"*Third Month* 13*th.* — Received a letter, informing us of the decease of dear brother George. He was favoured with an easy passage, and we are not without the consoling hope that he is gone to unite with the countless number of those that surround the throne of the Most High, and unceasingly celebrate the praises of him who saved them, having washed them from their sins in his own blood. May we give due heed to the warning voice that proclaims, in this fresh instance of the uncertainty of all earthly things, the admonitory language,—'Be ye also ready; for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh.'

"*Fourth Month* 16*th.*—Under a continued sense of

weakness and poverty, my mind was instructed to look above all subordinate teaching, and to avoid a dependence on man, by the remembrance of the following passage:—'Are there any of the vanities of the Gentiles that can cause rain? or can the heavens give showers? Art not thou he, O Lord our God? Therefore we will wait upon thee; for thou hast made all these things?'

"*Fifth Month* 16*th*.—Grant, O Lord God Omnipotent, that I may be preserved on the right hand and on the left from the many subtle devices of the unwearied adversary. May nothing be suffered to mar thy blessed work of grace in my heart. Enable me to fix my spiritual eye on the Captain of the soul's salvation, and, being led forth by him, may it be my favoured experience (though wholly unworthy) to overcome all my soul's enemies, and eventually, through the merits and merciful mediation of the Saviour of sinners, may an entrance be abundantly ministered into his everlasting kingdom.

"I am still quite shut up as regards any further communication in the line of the ministry, and am at times brought very low. There is, however, some sign of life, inasmuch as the secret exercises of my mind are often strikingly in unison with the communications of the anointed messengers of the Most High. May patience have her perfect work, and the grain of faith be brought into exercise.

"*Seventh Month* 10*th*.—My sojourn during the last three months has been as in the wilderness; yet have I been mercifully made partaker of many favours, and the evidence has at times been permitted that the Lord has not forsaken or forgotten me. My soul ofttimes cleaveth unto the dust. Quicken me, O Lord, according to thy word.

"*Seventh Month* 31*st*.—Returned to Croydon from Charl-

bury. During this month our lot has been cast in various places. The vacation commenced on the 29th ult.: on the 11th my dear H. and self, with our two youngest children, went to Folkestone, intending to take lodgings there for a week; but not succeeding in this, we went forward to Dover. Here we remained till Fourth-day, the 19th. On the First-day morning I was sensible of a call to break the silence of the meeting for worship, which was yielded to, and was followed by the reward of peace. Thus, after an interval of nearly six months, has my mouth been again opened in the solemn assembly. The Lord's ways are truly not as our ways, nor his thoughts as our thoughts. May it be the constant desire of my soul to be preserved in simple dependence on Divine guidance, and kept from going forward in my own strength, or tarrying through weakness, when the good Shepherd is mercifully pleased to lead onward."

John Sharp then notices their return to Croydon, where they found Mary Ann Napper very poorly: she had been spending the vacation at the school with her sister Sophia, one of the teachers. M. A. N. however improved so much, that John Sharp and his wife left home again on the 21st, and spent a few days at Luton, Sibford, and Charlbury. While at the latter place they heard of the decease of M. A. Napper, and hastened to Croydon, hoping to be in time to attend the funeral. Owing to an accident, however, they only reached home just after the interment, and joined the company of Friends and relatives: "with whom," says J. S., "we spent the remainder of the evening."

"Thus are we again reminded of the frailty of our nature, and the uncertainty of our continuance in this transitory state. May this event be sanctified to the good of those most nearly connected with the departed, and prove an instructive warning to us all.

"And now, on returning home to resume my accustomed duties in this family, may it be my earnest and increasing desire to be found faithful in the discharge of all that devolves on me. I believe my growth in grace much depends on my daily seeking for Divine aid, and the renewal of spiritual strength, in retirement before the Lord.

"*Eighth Month* 3*rd*.—This day the school re-opens, after a vacation of five weeks. May the sense of awful responsibility deepen on my own mind, and on the minds of all who have the care and oversight of the dear children; and may we all be increasingly careful so to maintain the watch, that we may be good examples, endeavouring to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.

"*Eighth Month* 20*th*.—First-day. Favoured with peaceful feelings on closing the last week, which continue with me on the opening of another. May the watch be daily and hourly maintained, and a hunger and thirst after the bread and water of life increasingly prevail. Our meeting last Fourth-day was a time in which I felt very little sensible of good; but towards the close, our Saviour's conversation with the Jews, in which he spoke of himself as the bread of life, arose with freshness and comfort before the view of my mind. Enable me, O Lord, to cast all my care upon thee, and by thy gracious aid to keep the eye singly directed to thee, that so the light that is in me may not become darkness, but shine more and more unto the perfect day. O carry on thy own work, which thou hast in mercy begun, and give me clearly to see, and cheerfully to obey, thy holy leadings and requirings."

On the 22nd, 23rd, and 24th, he notices the anniversaries of his marriage, the birth of his eldest child, and his appointment as Superintendent. On the 23rd, he thus addressed his wife:—

"Six years have now elapsed since the memorable day on which we were united by the tenderest of ties, and I incline to commune with thee in this way, on the interesting occasion of the return of the anniversary.

"In taking a review of this period, I feel that the language of the Psalmist which was read on the morning of our union is still such as I can gratefully adopt: 'Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.' May we unitedly cherish the belief that the unslumbering Shepherd continues to regard us with an eye of tender compassion, unworthy as we are of the least of all his mercies; and, thankfully appreciating his goodness to us in the days that are past, may we be more earnestly desirous that for the future we may be more fully devoted to his service, and seek in our daily conduct and conversation to show forth his praise.

"Nearly twelve months have now passed since we were called to fill a more prominent and responsible station than we previously occupied, in the superintendence of this large family; during this period we have been favoured to perform the arduous duties that have devolved upon us more easily and comfortably than we might have expected; and although discouragements and difficulties have at times prevailed, there is cause for the tribute of thanksgiving to be offered to our great and gracious Helper, and for us to take fresh courage with reference to our future engagements.

"A deep sense of my own frailties and my manifold deficiencies often attends me, and I know that a similar feeling brings thee at times very low. It is well for us to be often

reminded of our own nothingness; but may a sense of this never be allowed to discourage beyond measure; let it rather lead us to the source from whence fresh supplies of help and strength may be obtained. 'He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.' Let us earnestly press after this blessed experience; then shall we be favoured with a calmness and collectedness of mind, even when difficulties and troubles beset our pathway. These we must expect to encounter; and it is only as our own minds are kept in subjection to that controlling influence which proclaims even to the troubled ocean, Peace, be still! that we can meet with adverse occurrences without being unduly disturbed. He whom we desire to serve is not a hard master; he calls for nothing at our hands which he will not enable us to perform; it is required of us to be faithful according to what we have, not according to what we have not; if but the one talent be committed to us, he will not call us to account for the five or the ten. Let us then seek increasingly to be content with such things as we have (spiritually), and then to commit the keeping of our souls to him in well-doing as unto a faithful Creator.

"*Eighth Month 27th.*—In our meeting this evening I again ventured on my feet, after having passed through much exercise of mind in the earnest desire to be restrained from offering any thing before the Lord which he did not call for, and also from withholding more than was meet. From some cause I had not so much self-possession as I was favoured with on the two former occasions on which I have believed myself required thus to come forward, and I sat down without expressing all that was before me. I know not why it was thus with me; perhaps to teach me not to be over-anxious in these awful engage-

ments to acquit myself well in the sight of my Heavenly Father and of my fellow-men. O for more simplicity, and a childlike dependence on divine direction! My feelings on this occasion remind me of a remark of a dear friend to this effect:—Thou wilt have to be baptized into the cloud, as well as into the sea.

"*Ninth Month* 1*st*.—Another month has run its course, and a fresh one is entered upon; thus the year revolves, and we draw nearer and nearer to the end of our probation. O for increased diligence and watchfulness!

"On Fourth-day evening, the 30th, I felt the presence of my divine Master very near, and the petition ascended to him that he would be pleased to own us with a sense of his love in the weekly questioning on the Scriptures then about to commence. I entered the school-room without having any definite plan, but was favoured with ability to hand a little counsel and encouragement, which was received by the boys with seriousness, and much solemnity prevailed. May the divine blessing rest on every right endeavour to sow the good seed."

There are many who can testify to the interesting and instructive character of these Scripture questionings, as conducted by John Sharp; best help was often evidently near him, the gift of "teaching," which he conspicuously possessed, being called into exercise, and also occasionally, as in the instance just noticed, that of the ministry. Many, it is believed, received much instruction and serious and lasting impressions on these occasions.

"*Tenth Month* 31*st*.—During the month now about to close, I am not sensible of having made any progress in my

heavenward journey. I deeply lament my dwarfishness; and truly I have no power or might either to go forward in the way of holiness, or to withstand the fiery assaults of the enemy. O Lord, thou hast all power in heaven and on earth; be thou pleased to uphold me and preserve me, and quicken my zeal, which is indeed at a low ebb. O give me to see clearly the extent of thy divine requirements in the awfully responsible situation in which I am placed. Enable me to walk circumspectly in all things, setting a good example to all.

"Unite my beloved partner and myself more closely than ever, and strengthen us in our feeble desires to serve thee, and to seek first the things of thy everlasting kingdom. Enable us, if it please thee, to overcome the backwardness we feel to commune with each other on those things that concern our everlasting well-being. Cast out, O Lord, all slavish fear from our hearts, and let the filial fear of offending thee abundantly prevail. Give us ability to bring our precious little ones to thee, and do thou condescend to take them as it were into thine own arms and bless them; make them wholly thine; incline their hearts to make an early and entire surrender of all to thy service and disposal. Season my heart, O merciful Father, with thy grace; give me day by day my daily bread; feed me with food convenient for me, and enable me in conduct and conversation to show forth thy praise to all around me.

"*Twelfth Month 2nd.*—We have now entered upon the last month of the year. During the last few weeks, my spiritual state has often reminded me of the expression of the apostle Paul when on his voyage to Rome, that 'neither sun nor stars for many days appeared:' yet could I not feel that the further expression was applicable, namely, 'that all hope of being saved was now taken away.' No! I can

thankfully acknowledge that I am enabled still to trust in him who hath been my Helper hitherto, and to believe that if faith and patience fail not, deliverance from every yoke of bondage will be mercifully granted, and the glorious liberty of the children of God will, in a greater degree, become my blessed experience.

"*Twelfth Month* 3*rd*.—Under an apprehension that a little message was handed me for communication in our afternoon meeting, I ventured on my feet, and was favoured with ability to utter what appeared to be called for; peaceful poverty was my portion the remainder of the day.

"Preserve me, O Lord, in humility and watchfulness, and lead me along step by step in the path of obedience to thy divine requirings, preserving me alike from going before or tarrying behind my unerring Guide.

"*Twelfth Month* 31*st*.—My mind was much exercised both in and out of meeting under the consideration of our being brought very near the close of another year; in the evening I endeavoured to remind the children of the mercies of which we have been liberally permitted to partake during the year, and to invite them to enter afresh into covenant with him who hears and answers prayer; seeking for ability to adopt the language of the patriarch Jacob: 'If God will be with me in the way that I go, and will give me bread to eat and raiment to put on, then shall the Lord be my God.'

"*First Month* 9*th*, 1844.—Since the commencement of the present year, my time has been much occupied with the accounts; yet have my thoughts at times been turned towards him who crowneth the year with his goodness, with some desires to serve him better than heretofore.

"Be pleased, O Lord, to give me to see clearly what thou mayst call for at my hands, both in the church and in this family; enable me in life and conversation to walk accept-

ably in thy sight, and be a good example to all those over whom I am placed; carry on thy own work of purification and sanctification in my soul, and enable me, if consistent with thy holy will, to tell of thy goodness and mercy to others, and invite them to come, taste, and see how good thou art. (Four times only during the last year was my mouth opened in testimony in our religious meetings.) Grant, O Lord, an entire willingness to be anything or nothing, according to the purposes of thy unerring wisdom. Let me not walk in darkness, O Lord, not knowing whither I go; but be thou pleased to favour me, (unworthy as I am,) with the guidance of thy inshining light, and enable me to follow its discoveries without turning to the right hand or to the left.

He addressed the following letter to a young friend about this period:—

"I wish simply to express the desire of my heart, that on the recurrence of the anniversary of thy birth, there may be a willingness to make the solemn and heart-searching enquiry, What has been the chief object of my pursuit during the eighteen years I have passed in this state of probation? What proportion of this period has been entirely devoted to the Lord's service? What is the present tendency of my desires and affections? Are the former directed to the one thing needful? Are the latter set on things above? Have I yielded my heart unreservedly to that power, by which alone all the corrupt propensities of my nature may be overcome? Does the love of my Saviour constrain me to live not to myself, but to him who died for me and rose again?

"I need not multiply these enquiries; they all have one object; that of leading to a full and entire surrender of the

will and of the affections to him whose right alone it is to rule and reign in all our hearts, and in whose service it is at once our duty and privilege to engage.

"I can unite with such of thy correspondents as desire that thou mayst enjoy every blessing consistent with the divine will, and that, whether thy earthly course be of long or short continuance, thou mayst let thy obedience keep pace with knowledge, and thus be made a partaker of that soul-enriching peace, which none of the pleasures or treasures of this world can ever afford.

"*Third Month* 23*rd.*—After alluding to the answering of the second query, he observes,—Surely if we do not grow in the truth, the fault is our own: 'the Lord is not slack concerning his promises,' and we cannot doubt that he wills our advancement in every thing that is excellent. How is it with myself in this respect? Alas! I cannot speak of much, if any, growth of late. O for a close searching of heart, and a deep and abiding sense of my own utter helplessness, and of my need of the aid of him who is mighty to save, and able to deliver to the very uttermost! 'As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me.' Let this be my watchword for the time to come; and if this blessed experience be attained, (that of abiding in Christ, the living vine,) there will not fail to be a bringing forth fruit to the glory of the great Husbandman.

"*Fourth Month* 18*th.*—Humbled under a sense of my dwarfishness. O Lord, suffer not the light that is in me to become darkness; but grant, in thy wonted mercy, that it may increase, and shine more and more unto the perfect day. I long for a closer walk with thee, O God; be thou pleased to cast out of my heart every thing that defileth, and that stands opposed to the swaying of thy righteous

sceptre. O let me not live in a state of forgetfulness of thee; but do thou enable me to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith thou hast been mercifully pleased to call me, and thus live to the praise and glory of thy ever-excellent name.

"This evening an addition was made to our family by the birth of a little boy. It is cause for humble heartfelt gratitude that my dear H. has been permitted to get well through this time of trial: it should indeed be numbered with those unmerited mercies which have been abundantly bestowed by an all-bountiful Hand.

"*Fourth Month* 28*th.*—Very little of spiritual refreshment through the day; but at the close of it a feeling of solemnity prevailed, when the teachers sat down together, and in reading an account of the close of our late dear and honoured friend Daniel Wheeler, much tenderness of spirit was, I believe, felt by some of our little company. I was constrained to address those present with a few words, which tended to my own peace.

"*Fifth Month* 26*th.*—Spoke a few words in our meeting in the morning, reviving the language, 'Awake, O north wind, and come thou south,' &c. It was truly an exercise of faith; but my mind felt relieved from a great burden after having given expression to what appeared called for at my hands.

"*Fifth Month* 22*nd to* 27*th.*—Attended several sittings of the Yearly Meeting, which were solemn and comforting, affording an evidence that our Heavenly Father is not unmindful of us. Testimonies were read in the course of the meeting on behalf of some who had borne a large share in the burden and heat of their day, and have during the past year been gathered to their eternal rest: among these were Elizabeth Robson, Sarah Abbott, Maria Fox and William Allen. One thing struck me forcibly as regards the last-mentioned friend. Although a man of so many and varied

pursuits and engagements, he appears from early life to have been very careful to maintain the practice of daily private retirement to wait upon the Almighty for the renewal of his spiritual strength. How frequently do we find the most favoured instruments brought to the acknowledgment of the benefit they have derived from this practice. As regards myself, I feel that I have been slow to learn this lesson, and that I have not acted fully up to my convictions in this respect. May this consideration lead to increased diligence; for I am abundantly convinced that my spiritual advancement much depends on a faithful performance of this important duty.

"*Sixth Month* 12*th*.—Heard of the sudden decease of William Backhouse, which took place in meeting at Darlington last First-day evening. He had risen to address the meeting; but, before he had uttered a word, he fell back into Edward Pease's arms and expired! He was about to proceed to Norway on a religious visit to the few who profess the principles of Friends there, little expecting that his last journey was so near. In reflecting on this, I have remembered how it was with Abraham, when called upon to sacrifice his darling child, when every preparation had been made, the will was accepted; and I trust this dear friend has been thus taken while engaged in his great Master's work on earth, to unite with the just of all generations in the same blessed service in the courts above, where his spirit will be free from those conflicts and temptations inseparable from this state of probation. Does not this event again proclaim the language,—'Be ye also ready; for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh?'

"*Sixth Month* 25*th*.—I heard to-day of the wreck of the *Manchester* steam packet, at the mouth of the Elbe; the vessel in which the late William Backhouse was to have

gone to Norway. Truly the ways of the Most High are past finding out! He doeth all things well!

"*Eighth Month* 3*rd*.—Seventh-day evening. Week after week rolls on, and I seem to make no progress in my heavenward journey. O for more zeal in the great Master's cause; more devotedness to his service; a more frequent coming to the mercy-seat!

"My various duties and engagements seem to stand much in the way of daily retirement; yet this must not be neglected. O for ability to press after it through all!

"Enable me, O Lord, if permitted to see the opening of another week, to enter upon it with a single eye to thee, and a sense of my need of daily dependence on thee for even the desire to walk acceptably before thee. Bless our own dear children, O Lord, and enable us, notwithstanding the many hindrances that beset our path, to lead them in early life to the feet of their and our adorable Redeemer; and do thou, in thy wonted goodness, bring them into a willingness to hear the gracious words that proceed out of his mouth, and to obey his holy leadings and requirings, made known in the secret of their souls.

"*Eighth Month* 7*th*.—My meeting was spoiled in consequence of my mind having been disturbed just before going thither by some trying occurrences.

"The following remarks of the late Hannah Kilham are, on this occasion, as they have often been, very much in accordance with my feelings:—

"'I feel the concern in which I am engaged to be one that requires great collectedness of mind, to maintain through all, the true peace and dignity of the Christian character, which will not indolently pass by the faults of those of whom we have charge, to avoid the trouble of counteracting them, and of doing justice by timely admonition

and instruction. At the same time I would equally avoid the habit of hasty reflection, even when there is just cause of complaint. I long to pass through a multitude of temporal cares in that collected and watchful frame of mind, which sees the encompassing danger, and avoids it.'

"*Eleventh Month* 21*st.*—Monthly Meeting at Wandsworth. Some evidence was granted in the meeting for worship of the continued mercy of our Heavenly Father, and a little renewal of strength experienced. The warfare of the Christian was adverted to: O for more ability to go forward in this warfare, conquering and to conquer, in humble trustful reliance on the unconquered Captain of our salvation!

"*Eleventh Month* 25*th.*—Second-day morning. About to commence the duties of another week. Grant, O Lord, that by watchfulness unto prayer, and a constant remembrance that thou art near, and that the inmost recesses of the heart are laid open to thy all-penetrating eye, preservation from all that is offensive in thy pure and holy sight may be my favoured experience. Preserve me, O Lord, from any harshness of expression, and from everything in word or deed that would be a cause of stumbling, or even of hindrance, to any of the little ones entrusted to my care. 'Purge me with hyssop and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.'

Twelfth Month 20*th.*—On the occasion of an interment at Peckham, which he attended, John Sharp writes:—"Soon after entering the meeting-house, I yielded to an apprehension that it was required of me to hand a word of consolation to the bereaved and sorrowing relatives, which was followed with the rich and unmerited reward of peace. It was a solemn meeting: may the remembrance of it be profitably cherished.

"*Twelfth Month* 31*st*.—Humble me, O Lord, this day, under a sense of my short-comings, and enable me to offer unto thee the tribute of praise and thanksgiving for thy multiplied mercies in the year that is now nearly brought to a close.

"I have greatly to lament my dwarfishness, and long for a renewed and increased qualification to labour in thy cause. O for ability to promote thy glory by a consistent walk before the various members of this family, and by a devotedness of heart to thy service in the church—whether it may be consistent with thy holy will that this should be limited by a secret exercise of spirit, or whether my mouth may be opened in the solemn assembly—to proclaim thy goodness and to speak of thy wonderful works.

"O grant an increase of humility, and preserve me in a state of daily watchfulness and prayer: enable me more and more to live to thee, ever remembering the solemn declaration and injunction,—'Ye are not your own; ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.'"

CHAPTER IX.

1845—1846. Æt. 32—34.

EXTRACTS FROM JOURNAL—YEARLY MEETING—RULES OF CONDUCT—LETTER TO A FRIEND—ILLNESS IN THE SCHOOL—DECEASE OF ONE OF THE GIRLS AND OF HIS YOUNGEST CHILD—FURTHER EXTRACTS.

The letters and memoranda quoted in the last two chapters present the sketch of John Sharp's life, with his progress spiritually,—the record, if we may so call it, of his inner life,—very much in his own words. The attentive and serious reader will have observed many points and circumstances, which either coincide with his own experience of the Christian course, or from which he may derive comfort, encouragement, or warning, in days yet to come. Great may be the advantage of tracing, with this view, the career of those who have trodden life's paths before us; ever bearing in our remembrance, that while with a lively degree of sympathetic interest we may regard the steppings of those whom we have known and loved on earth, we can only safely follow them in so far as they have been enabled, in simplicity and humility, to tread in the footsteps of our all-perfect and adorable Exemplar.

We have seen with what views John Sharp regarded that highly important and responsible position to which he believed himself called, as a minister of the gospel.

While these feelings might at times be characterized as a deep and almost awful sense of the very solemn nature of the engagement, it is interesting and instructive to observe, how earnest are at times his desires to be enlarged in the exercise of his gift for the good of others; and how, while desiring to be preserved from running before his guide, or making offerings in his own strength, he was equally anxious to be kept from the other extreme of withholding more than is meet.

"*First Month* 31*st*, 1845.—A dear Friend having expressed a desire to see some of the older boys in small companies, and kindly wishing me to be present, we commenced this evening. The first company of five boys evinced much tender feeling, and it appeared as if the counsel extended found ready entrance. May it be blessed to their lasting good. [This was the first of a series of interviews with the boys, which were continued till they had extended to the whole school. The results were very satisfactory and encouraging; among them was the establishment of an association for the religious and moral improvement of the boys.]

"*Second Month* 4*th*.—Thirty-three years old this day. I am very sensible of the necessity of increased watchfulness, and a closer walk with God. A petition of the Psalmist has been much with me the last few days:—'Be thou my strong habitation, whereunto I may continually resort.' It is only as we are endeavouring to walk humbly before our God, and to retain a continual sense of our dependence on him, for ability to live in his fear, and to serve him faithfully, even in the smallest requirings, that we can look to the name of the Lord as a strong tower, into which we may run and find safety. Be thou pleased, O Heavenly Father, to lead me

and guide me: preserve me from danger and temptation on every side; and enable me, on this return of the anniversary of my birth, to renew my covenant with thee, and to seek earnestly for the aid of thy Holy Spirit, to strengthen and qualify for every service into which it may please thee to call me. While I thus write, I feel the need there is of further purification. Let not thine hand spare, O Lord, nor thine eye pity, till thou hast made me altogether what thou wouldst have me to be.

"*Third Month* 1*st*.—There have been some evidences of late of the extension of a fresh visitation of divine love to many of the children, and we trust there is cause to believe that some of their minds have been contrited under the sense of it. May it be the earnest desire of all who have in any degree the charge of them, to be very careful to attend to the injunction,—'See that ye offend not one of these little ones;' but rather, by the powerful influence of a Christian example, and by a secret exercise of spirit on their behalf, to lead them to Jesus, and to commit them to his blessed care and keeping.

"*Third Month* 8*th*.—Seventh-day night. Another week nearly over;—how rapid is the flight of time! Oh, that I sufficiently prized it! Lord, enable me to maintain a closer watch during the coming week, than has been the case during the past. O for more fervency of spirit; more watchfulness unto prayer; more of a faithful devotedness to thy blessed service!

"*Third Month* 18*th*.—Attended Kent Quarterly Meeting, to my own comfort. I ventured to express a few words in the meeting for worship, and was favoured to return home without the feeling of condemnation. May he who knows the secrets of every heart, condescend to preserve me on the right hand and on the left.

"*Fourth Month 5th.*—'Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry; for anger resteth in the bosom of fools.' I feel that I still have need of this watchword; having been provoked to anger this evening by the misconduct of one of my charge, which brought condemnation.

"*Fourth Month 25th.*—A meeting of the 'Association for the religious and moral improvement of the school,' took place in the evening. There was an evidence of much serious feeling on the part of most present: there can be no doubt that a good work has been commenced in the minds of several of the boys. May I, and all who have the care of them, be very watchful, that we do not by any means 'offend one of these little ones.' While I desire to cherish the feeling of gratitude to our Heavenly Father, for these evidences of his continued love to us, may I increasingly feel the awful responsibility that devolves on me, in having the oversight of such a family. O Lord, be pleased to enable me to go in and out before them with acceptance in thy sight.

"*Fifth Month 23rd.*—[At the evening sitting of the Yearly Meeting] William Forster made many weighty remarks on the blessedness of a lowly, contented mind, and on the dangers and temptations incident to the possession of wealth. He observed that many amongst us could not conceal from themselves that they had peculiar talents for the making of money, and that some might find, from the success that had attended their schemes for enlarging their possessions, a disposition to proceed still further in the accumulation of property; but oh! he added, most emphatically, there is the possibility that the Most High, in thus permitting their worldly possessions to increase, might send leanness into their souls.

"He also observed, in his own peculiarly weighty and solemn manner, that if we could look upon our possessions—

be they great or be they small—and believe they were those which the Lord had provided for us; with what a humble, reverent, filial, thankful feeling could we lift up our hearts to him, and bless and praise and magnify his great and glorious name. J. J. Gurney also alluded to the temptations and trials incident to a state of poverty; encouraging young Friends, particularly, to devote their time and substance to the alleviation of the wants of the thousands who are suffering the hardships, privations, and wretchedness of extreme indigence.

" *Sixth Month 7th.*—It has been my privilege to attend several sittings of the Yearly Meeting. Desires were raised in my mind to be wholly and without reserve given up to the Lord's disposal; and to submit unflinchingly to the refining operations of his holy hand, that thus a preparation might be experienced for an increase of service in his church.

" During the last week, I have had to feel the need of a closer watch over myself, with reference to my demeanour before the children, particularly those who are most prone to go astray, and require correction. May I increasingly remember the instructive language,—' The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.' "

In connexion with the extracts recently given, showing John Sharp's anxious desire for ability to walk circumspectly before his charge, it may be well to record a series of regulations which he laid down for himself, in this respect, although these more especially refer to his outward duties as an instructor of youth. He says :—

" The following rules for the regulation of my own conduct in reference to the school should be constantly borne in mind and acted upon :—

"1. Never do a thing *for* a scholar, but teach him to do it himself.

"2. Never get out of patience with dulness; or rather never get out of patience with anything, but especially with dulness and stupidity.

"3. Cherish an interest in *all* the scholars, and aim equally to secure the progress of all.

"4. Do not hope, or attempt, to make all your pupils alike.

"5. Do not allow the faults, failings or wants of any individual, to engross a disproportionate share of your time.

"6. Guard against prejudice of all kinds.

"7. Assume no false appearances as to knowledge or character.

"*Seventh Month* 3*rd*.—On the 1st instant the children dispersed for the vacation: this leaves me a little more at leisure, and a great relief it is to be freed from the care of so large a household for a time. May the opportunity thus afforded for seasons of retirement and serious reflection be turned to good account. In the multiplicity of cares devolving upon me, I feel at times the danger of neglecting that which is to me the most important—the state of my own mind."

During this vacation, John Sharp accompanied his brother for a short time in his religious engagements on his way to the Scilly Isles, attending the meetings at Horsham, Alton, and Basingstoke.

On the 28th he notices the birth of his sixth child, a little girl; and adds:—The tribute of heartfelt gratitude is again abundantly due to him, who has thus safely brought through six troubles.

"*Eighth Month 4th.*—To-morrow the school re-opens. It is my desire that I may be made increasingly sensible of my own utter insufficiency for the great work in which I am engaged, and that the sense of this may bring me, oftener than has heretofore been the case, to the inexhaustible fountain, where a never-failing supply of that help and strength which can alone avail is known.

"*Eighth Month 10th.*—My mind received some comfort from the recollection of the promise,—'The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly.' Oh that the conditions on which such a promise may be applicable to my case, may be carefully attended to on my part; and then may I be enabled in faith to anticipate its fulfilment, to the unspeakable joy and relief of my mind. My journey for a long time has been much in the wilderness; yet an oasis has now and then been arrived at, where some refreshment has been known.

"*Eighth Month 17th.*—The morning meeting was to me a time of exercise. In the afternoon reading [to the children] I very unexpectedly came to a passage in the memorial of David Ferris, from which it appears that the precious promise brought sweetly to my remembrance last First-day was sounded in his ear as applicable to him; from which he hoped for a speedy deliverance, faith being given him to believe in the promise. He continued, however, to be afflicted with the assaults, temptations, and evil suggestions of Satan for some months, notwithstanding which his faith did not fail, but he prayed for its fulfilment in the Lord's time. At length he was so remarkably delivered from the power of the enemy, and filled with divine consolation, that for the space of nearly two years, during his waking hours, he did not know that there was one moment in which he could not sing living praises to the Lord. He adds, 'No

losses, crosses, or disappointments, did in any degree disturb me, at least not perceptibly, either to myself or others; for my delight was in objects very different from anything which this world can give or take away.'

"*Eighth Month 27th.*—Under some discouragement, from a consciousness that we have sustained a loss in the removal of several of the boys, who left school just before the vacation. But few of the elder boys, I fear, are exerting a decidedly beneficial influence over the rest, though I do think several are desirous of improvement as regards their general conduct. O Lord, if it please thee, give the qualification to labour for their best welfare, and to sow seed which shall, sooner or later, spring up, and bring forth fruit to thy praise.

"*Eighth Month 30th.*—The state of the boys' school continues to press on my mind, with desires that way may open for encouraging the right-minded among them, and repressing the buddings of evil in any. Be pleased, O Lord, to contrite the hearts of these dear children, and make them sensible of the flowing of thy love and tender mercy towards them, which would gather them, 'as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings.'

Ninth Month 14th.—Preparative Meeting. 'We have toiled all night and have taken nothing.' The state of my mind this day brought the above feelingly to my remembrance. May patience have her perfect work, and may every dispensation allotted me produce the end designed by him who doeth all things well.

"In the remembrance of the words quoted Eighth Month 10th, I am ready to exclaim, 'Remember the word unto thy servant, on which thou hast caused me to hope.' Oh, that the promise may, in the Lord's time, be realized to my unspeakable comfort and furtherance in the way everlasting!

"*Ninth Month 25th.*—I sensibly feel my dwarfishness; yet I cannot altogether attribute it to an unwillingness to be devoted to the Lord's service. I hope I am not deceived in this all-important point; yet I do feel as if the prevailing desire of my heart is, to be wholly conformed to the divine will in all things, whatever may be the cost. Why then, I may well ask, does not the work proceed more rapidly, and the fruits of the Spirit become more evident in my daily walk? The fault must be my own. May there be an increasing earnestness in the pursuit of those things that make for peace—a continual striving for the mastery over every vestige of my natural corruption—an abiding sense of my own utter insufficiency—and, from a consideration of this, a constant watchfulness unto prayer, and frequent waiting on the Lord in private retirement, for the supply of all my spiritual wants.

On the 12th of Tenth Month John Sharp records some faithful remarks received from a dear and honoured friend, who felt it right to remind him of the parable of the talents; "contrasting the conduct of him that had but one talent, with that of those who had received more. And how awful, said he, would it be for any to whom the two or three talents might be given, if they also hid their Lord's money, even though in a clean napkin, burying it in the earth." He afterwards addressed to this Friend the following letter:—

"Thou wouldst rightly consider that I had an unfeeling heart, if thou couldst suppose I were insensible of thy kind and fatherly care over me, year after year, up to the present day. I trust this is not the case; and having pondered on thy words of warning, kindly dropped for my benefit yester-

day—although they have occasioned deep heart-searchings, and involved me in some perplexity—I feel it due to thee to strive to overcome my backwardness to communicate with any one respecting my spiritual progress, and tell thee a little how it has been with me, more especially with reference to my having, at times, expressed a few words in our religious meetings.

"It is now nearly two years and three-quarters since I apprehended it was first required of me to give expression to my feelings in a meeting for worship. I had many years before been impressed with a firm belief, that, if obedience should keep pace with knowledge, this would be required at my hands; and I have never dared to doubt the reality of the call I was then favoured with; although, from my having so seldom had the commission renewed, I should, I believe, have many times been disposed to do so, had not the admonitory words been firmly impressed on my mind, on this first public engagement,—'No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.'

"During much of this time I have had to journey as through the wilderness, experiencing great strippedness and poverty; fifteen months have nearly gone over since I last uttered a word in our own meeting; yet am I not sensible of having refrained my lips, when the command to speak in the Lord's name has been heard. How often it would have been sounded in my ear, if the watch and the warfare had been more diligently and steadily maintained, and how far I may in this way have been the cause of thy mental exercise yesterday morning, is matter for deep and awful consideration, under which I desire, for my own profit, to dwell.

"Latterly I have at times thought, that at no distant period, a little further service may be allotted me; and as I

was partaking, yesterday morning, of a little spiritual refreshment, the thought did occur that I was 'eating my morsel alone;' yet was I not sensible of a command to dispense it for the benefit of others. I believe there was a willingness wrought in me to yield obedience, if it had been called for.

"I know I am a mere stripling, and require to be instructed in the way of God more perfectly, even by experienced brethren and fathers in the church; yet do I greatly desire to be preserved on the one hand from offering strange fire to the Lord, and on the other from withholding more than is meet, lest even an increase of poverty should be my portion.

"Accept, my dear and valued friend, my grateful acknowledgment of all thy past kindness, and continue to watch over me for good; and O may the time come when thou mayst be encouraged in so doing by an increase of fruitfulness, to the praise of him who gives the ability both to plant and to water, and who is abundantly willing to crown all with his blessing.

"*Eleventh Month* 12*th*.—Henry George's remains were interred in our burial-ground before meeting. There was a solemn pause at the grave, but nothing said. After about an hour's silence in the meeting, I was strengthened once more to give utterance to an exercise of mind, under, as I apprehend, the constraining influence of divine love, and was favoured to feel no condemnation, which I esteem a favour. I believe heaviness and sorrow would have been my portion, had I not yielded to this apprehended call. O for faith and faithfulness!

On this and the few following days, John Sharp notices the appearance of illness in the school, which

in most cases assumed the form of scarlatina. Referring to this, he remarks in a letter to his brother :—

"*Eleventh Month* 28*th*.—Since we have had illness in the family, we have been obliged to forego the privilege of joining our friends at the meeting-house; we meet, however, in our own school-room, and feel the value of the truth, that the worship which is acceptable to our Heavenly Father is not restricted to time or place. It has at times been a comfort to me to recur to the last meeting I attended at the meeting-house, when I was strengthened to hand the word of exhortation, under the apprehension that this service was again required at my hands, though after the lapse (so far as relates to our own meeting) of about a year and a half. Mine appears to be a peculiar allotment in this respect: I desire to be resigned to it, and if only favoured to know, and enabled to do, the Lord's will, may I be satisfied with my portion of service, however scanty, and rejoice that the Spirit is poured out in larger measure on many honoured and beloved brethren and sisters in religious fellowship.

"*Twelfth Month* 3*rd*.—[Referring to the previous notices of the indisposition in the school.] From the last date to the present the illness has gradually gone more or less through the family. There have been a few severe cases, and one, that of S. G——, of W——, terminated fatally. She was taken ill on the night of the 25th ult.; on the 29th she became unconscious, and continued so to the close. Her mother came on the morning of the 1st; but there was no interval in which she could recognize her, and she quietly expired at a quarter before two P.M.

The remains are to be interred this afternoon: may the occasion be blessed to the lasting good of the dear children

and others, who may either attend the interment, or the meeting to be held afterwards in the girls' school-room.

"*Twelfth Month* 3*rd* (*continued.*)—Several Friends attended the funeral ; some of these came to the meeting afterwards, and a few staid to tea. Mary Sterry addressed the children very appropriately in the school-room ; and we had a comforting solid time after tea, in which, after Richard Barrett had expressed a few cordial words of encouragement, it seemed required of me to bend the knee, and return thanks to our Almighty and ever-present Helper, for the portion of sweetness mingled in this bitter cup, in the evidence of divine support to the bereaved parents, and in the permitted trust that the dear child now taken from us has been favoured to join the blessed family in the courts above."

On the 7th, John Sharp notices the serious illness of another of the girls: the symptoms in a few days became most trying and alarming; all hope of her recovery was relinquished, she took leave of those around her, and her end appeared very near; but subsequently, to the great relief and comfort of her distressed relatives and friends, she gradually recovered, and was entirely restored to health.

After this there appeared a little respite; but on the 15th one or two fresh cases occurred, and John Sharp's two youngest children became seriously affected with the disorder, the baby especially being very ill.

" *Twelfth Month* 18*th.*—At twenty-five minutes past one this morning, our dear babe was released from all her sufferings ; she had been getting worse since Second-day, the 15th. Considerable irritation of the bowels appears to

have been the cause, first of convulsions, from which she suffered much, and afterwards of effusion on the brain.

"This is the first time we have been required to surrender one of our beloved offspring to him from whom all our blessings come; and the language of my heart is, 'Shall we receive good at the hand of the Lord, and shall we not receive evil?'—especially when that which we may regard as evil may be, and probably is, a blessing in disguise.

"Oh that our other precious children and ourselves may be prepared, when time shall be no more, to join the happy spirit of this innocent lamb in the realms of endless bliss!

"*Twelfth Month* 21*st*.—The remains of our dear babe were committed to the silent grave before meeting this morning; this was the first time of our assembling at the meeting-house for six weeks. Mary Sterry sweetly revived the language of the Saviour,—'Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not:' thus showing they are the objects of his tender love and divine regard. It is truly cause of thankfulness that, under this bereavement, we have been enabled to cast our care upon him who continues graciously to care for us, and to resign our dear babe, without a murmur, to his blessed keeping.

"*First Month* 7*th*, 1846.—As my mind has at times, since the opening of a new year, recurred to that which has recently terminated, and taken a little review of the past, I have thought how much need there is to seek and strive after greater fervency of spirit, and devotedness of heart to the Lord's service; and more watchfulness with frequent retirement, that my growth in grace may be promoted; but, alas! how many times have I seen this, and yet how very far I fall short of the attainment of it. 'Lord, help me,' is the ejaculatory language of my soul at this time; but O for an abiding in the vine, so as continually to derive nourish-

ment and strength, and thus bring forth fruit to the glory of him, who has not failed to dig about and to dress. Oh that, in the year which has commenced, fruitfulness may abound to his praise.

"*Second Month* 1*st.*—Engaged in turning over the records of past experience for many years: this gives rise to mingled feelings. There is much, very much, that calls for gratitude to my Heavenly Father, whose mercies, both spiritual and temporal, have been abundantly bestowed, and much also to remind that to me belong blushing and confusion of face, on account of my numberless omissions and commissions. The following passage in Samuel Neale's life arrested my attention to-day; I fear I am one to whom his words apply:—'There seemed to me another state in the family, who were willing to partake of heavenly food with the children; but if it were not handed to them, they were easy and negligent about it, and ran to their outward affairs, and thereby neglected that which might be helpful to them, which was the reason why divine nourishment was withheld from them.' May I dwell under this consideration to my own profit!

"*Second Month* 22*nd.*—About to go to meeting. May we be favoured, if consistent with the divine will, with a sense of the good presence of him whom we profess to worship, and a portion of that sustenance which he alone can give, who declared himself to be the bread of life.

"*Second Month* 28*th.*—Two months of another year have run their course. How rapid the flight of time; how awful the consideration, that every day, week, month, and year, brings us so much nearer to eternity!

"*Third Month* 20*th.*—J. H. paid his visit to us to-day. May we cherish the remembrance of the counsel he was strengthened to impart, and may an increase of fruitfulness result from it, to the glory of the Most High.

"He began by alluding to the language of an apostle, peculiarly descriptive of the ministers of the gospel, but applicable, in some degree, to those who had to care for the youthful mind, as well as to those who were called to hand a portion of meat in due season to their fellow-servants who are more advanced in years,—'As having nothing, and yet possessing all things.' He referred to gifts and powers, natural and acquired, which might be brought into exercise by the Christian teacher; but appealed to me whether I had not found, that a very few words spoken in season, and under the influence of best wisdom, produced more effect than tenfold their number spoken in my own spirit, and rather dictated by the degree of annoyance occasioned by acts of misconduct, than by a calm consideration of the motives inducing them, or of that course which is most likely to benefit the object of reproof, admonition, or punishment. He queried whether I had not again and again felt the commission extended—'Feed my lambs;' and expressed his belief that, as the endeavour is maintained, humbly, faithfully, and lovingly, to fulfil this first commission, there will be, in the Lord's due and appointed time, a renewal of the command to labour in a larger family—the household of faith—even in discharge of the further commission—'Feed my sheep.' In order to this, there must be the attainment of that state, in which the inquiry, 'Lovest thou me?' could be responded to with the language of Peter, 'Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee.' He showed how needful it was that we should seek increasingly to become one another's joy in the Lord, heirs together of the grace of life, that our prayers be not hindered: that we should seek to be found, not pilgrims merely, but *fellow*-pilgrims, walking together in the same path, and in the same part of the path; that at the solemn

hour when one should be taken and the other left, the pang of separation might at least be mitigated, if not swallowed up, in the glorious prospect of meeting again where parting will be no more known.

" In allusion to the need of daily seeking for fresh supplies of help and strength from above, J. H. queried, Did Daniel, when charged with the affairs of the province of Babylon, allow this to excuse him from thus presenting himself before the Lord? Did he not rather exemplify in his conduct the holy resolution of King David,—' Evening and morning, and at noon, will I pray and cry aloud, and he shall hear my voice;' going into his chamber three times a day, and praying with his window open towards Jerusalem?

" Our dear brother was preciously remembered in supplication, especially with reference to his prospect of service in a distant land. Prayer ascended also on our behalf, and that of our beloved children. My heart responds at this moment to the aspiration that they may be the Lord's servants, dedicated to him from very early life.

" *Third Month 25th.*—I feel that it may be profitable to renew the inquiry, Why do I not make greater progress in the ' way everlasting?' Truly, I have been many times reminded by the unflattering witness, that, if I would grow in grace, there must be a frequent prostration before the Lord in retirement; an opportunity for this sacred exercise should, if possible, be secured daily. Oh may I be more and more deeply convinced of the absolute necessity of thus seeking for a renewal of spiritual strength; and not only so, but even press through every obstacle for the attainment of it! Lord, increase my faith, and my faithfulness and dedication of heart to thee.

" *Sixth Month 6th.*—Took leave of my dear brother on board the *Caledonia*, bound for Hamburg, on his way to

Norway: in this service he is accompanied by E. O. T. and J. B., who also have certificates from their Monthly Meeting. May they be favoured with a prosperous journey and safe return; and may they experience, in this weighty engagement, the guidance and aid of him, at whose bidding they are made willing to leave their dear and tender connexions, and seek to 'win souls.'

"*Seventh Month* 12*th.*—Another week has passed, and my mind is oppressed under a sense of my yet remaining sinfulness—of my spiritual deadness. O for a real death unto sin, and a life of righteousness and dedication unto the Lord. One day gives place to another, and every day brings me nearer to the end of the race. This would be no cause of regret if the day's work did but keep pace with the day; but, alas! I fear it is not so—nay, more, I know it is not so. 'What doth hinder?' 'My God shall enlighten my darkness,' said the Psalmist. Oh that it may be my blessed experience, unworthy, utterly unworthy, as I feel at this moment!

"What in me is dark,
Illumine; what is low, raise and support."

"*Seventh Month* 18*th.*—Seventh-day evening again come round. I find the cares of my very responsible situation press heavily upon me, and leave me too little opportunity for calm and quiet reflection, and for serious reading: from this I suffer loss.

"*Seventh Month* 22*nd.*—I have commenced the 'Life of William Allen,'—an interesting work: one or two passages have forcibly struck me, as calculated to be serviceable to myself. He says:—'Mary Stacey reminded me, that we were favoured with good in proportion to the solicitude with which we seek it.' Again:—'We cannot expect to be conquerors unless we strive; and that, not faintly and at intervals, but strenuously and constantly; then we may

expect divine assistance, and, at the great close, enjoy the promise to him that overcometh.'

"*Ninth Month* 12*th.*—On reading over a few of the memorandums penned about seven years ago, it appears to me that my spiritual condition at that time was more to be desired than my present state. I seem to make no progress: indeed, if this conclusion be correct, I have retrograded. It is an awful consideration: may it lead to close searching of heart, and increased watchfulness unto prayer. A more frequent record of the state of my mind would, I believe, be helpful.

"*Eleventh Month* 6*th.*—In the weekly questioning on the Scriptures, there appeared a door both of utterance and of entrance, beyond what I have known of late, for which I desire to be thankful. My mind had been looking to this opportunity for a day or two; and previous to meeting the boys, the prayer ascended, under some feeling of exercise on their behalf, that their hearts might be open to receive, and that I might be enabled to communicate, that which might tend to promote their growth in grace. This fresh proof of divine regard afforded encouragement in a time of dryness and drought, which had produced a feeling almost of despondency.

"*Eleventh Month* 8*th.*—After the lapse of very nearly a year, I expressed a few sentences towards the close of the meeting in the morning, and was favoured with a feeling of peace. Preserve me alike, O Lord, from walking in the light of the fire which I myself have kindled, and from quenching the shinings of thy pure Spirit in my heart. Grant an increase of faith, zeal, patience, humility, and watchfulness. How exemplary should be the daily walk of those, who believe themselves required to stand forth, in the assemblies of the people, as ambassadors for Christ!"

CHAPTER X.

1847—1848. ÆT. 34—36.

EXTRACTS—MORE FREQUENT ENGAGEMENT AS A MINISTER—ATTACK OF MEASLES IN THE SCHOOL—ATTENDS THE QUARTERLY MEETING AT NOTTINGHAM—DECEASE OF GEORGE LESTER—BECOMES A MEMBER OF THE MEETING FOR SUFFERINGS, AND CLERK OF THE MONTHLY MEETING.

"*First Month* 17*th*, 1847.—During the last few days, my mind has at times dwelt much on the recent removal of some who occupied prominent places amongst us, and may have been accounted as pillars in our church; and the desire has prevailed, that all who may be sensible of a call from the Lord to labour in word and doctrine, or in any other way, may be faithful in yielding obedience to the gentle and secret intimations of the divine will. My own dwarfishness and inability have been brought painfully into view; but there is One who can cause even the stones of the street to cry out. O for greater watchfulness and dedication of heart to him who has long been looking for fruit on a tree which he has been graciously pleased to dig about and to dress. Some sense has been mercifully permitted me this day, of the continuance of the love and tender compassion of our Heavenly Father, and under a feeling of the awfulness of the engagement, thanksgiving and prayer were vocally expressed at the close of our usual First-day evening reading in the parlour, just before retiring to rest. A few words were also addressed to the dear

children at their evening reading. O Lord, be thou pleased to preserve me in humility and fear before thee!

"*Second Month* 20*th.*—I long for a more constant sense of the Lord's presence, more of a dwelling in the secret place of the Most High; so that the mind may be frequently turned to the Source of all good by night and by day: then surely the language of the Psalmist might be at times adopted,—'I will both lay me down in peace and sleep; for thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety.'—'I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.'

"*Fourth Month* 3*rd.* — A little openness to address the boys before they went to bed, encouraging those who are desirous of being dedicated to the Lord's service in early life, to persevere, and to seek day by day, in secret and earnest prayer, for ability to overcome all evil, and to pursue the path that will lead to present and everlasting peace; not allowing their minds to be discouraged by feeling that their progress is slow, seeing that the great work of regeneration is generally a *gradual* work, &c.

"*Fifth Month* 28*th.*—The Yearly Meeting closed last evening. It has been a time of much favour, and oh that it may prove to have been a profitable one to me and many more; if it be not so, I believe it will tend to our condemnation. At one of the sittings I apprehended it right to express a few sentences with reference to the instructive character of the testimonies of deceased ministers, as tending to show the benefit and blessedness of early dedication, and the faithfulness of the Most High.

"*Sixth Month* 9*th.*—My mind dwelt during part of the meeting this day on the blessedness of the Lord's children, as they come to partake of the experience set forth in the promise, 'All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children.'

Towards the close, J. F. M., in the course of a short communication, revived and dwelt upon this passage, and one or two others which had also occupied my thoughts. This has sometimes been the case before, and tends to confirm my faith, and encourages me to believe that I am still (though wholly unworthy) mercifully regarded by him, whose watchful and tender care extends to the weakest of the flock."

Sixth Month 16*th.*—Recording the birth of another son, John Sharp remarks:—"Thus He who has helped in six troubles, has been near to support in the seventh. May gratitude be the covering of our minds, under a sense of the many unmerited mercies of which we are permitted to partake.

"*Seventh Month* 4*th.*—At our afternoon reading, ability was felt to bend the knee, and offer to him, who hears the feeblest and most unworthy of his children, the tribute of thanksgiving for past mercies and present blessings, and to intercede on behalf of the weak and the wayward—of those who are not likely to return here after the vacation, and of those who are looking towards meeting here again. The work of the ministry, and especially the vocal utterance of prayer on behalf of an assembly, is an awful engagement. May it ever be felt so. I trust a feeling of gratitude is in some degree mine, for the tenderness with which my mind has been affected of late at various times, and especially in our religious meetings."

In a letter to his brother, a few days subsequently, in allusion to the subject of the last extract, he says:—

"It is one thing to read of the weight of exercise attending such engagements as these, and another thing, I find, to experience the reality, even in my small measure. I long,

however, for increased diligence and faithfulness, and especially that the present season of intermission from accustomed duties and engagements may be a time of spiritual benefit.

"*Seventh Month 25th.* — In the evening meeting at Kingston, and on my way home, a feeling of indescribable poverty was my portion. I felt utterly destitute of good. I do not know that I brought this upon myself, and desire patiently to bear it. May all that is permitted to befal me, from within and from without, tend to my further purification and qualification for service in the church, if it should please him, who has a right to command our steppings, to entrust me with ever so small a commission to serve him!

"*Eighth Month 7th.*—Elizabeth Fry seems to have been remarkably supported under the pressure of numerous and important engagements, engrossing a very large portion of her time, and under trials and conflicts of various kinds, by continual approaches to the mercy-seat: she appears to have had very near access to her God and Saviour in prayer. Truly this is the refuge of the Lord's children, under all the circumstances in which they may be found, and Satan is very busy in placing obstacles in their way: I have found it so, to my loss. May I strive more and more for opportunities and for ability 'in everything, by prayer and supplication, to let my requests be made known unto God.'

> "For Satan trembles when he sees
> The weakest saint upon his knees."

It seems to be in reference to this that the words addressed to Peter have been brought to my remembrance:—'Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not; and

when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.' Oh, if I may, without presumption, believe that these gracious words are in any degree applicable to myself, what cause for humble and adoring gratitude! Be pleased, Lord, to hasten the time, when thy work may be so far accomplished, that my tongue may be loosed, and ability more largely experienced to make known thy goodness to others, and to tell of thy wonderful works.

"*Eighth Month* 22*nd.* — Heaviness was my portion throughout our morning meeting, and I felt very destitute of good. Towards the close, dear Mary Sterry was engaged in lively supplication on behalf of the young and rising generation, that their minds might receive the seed of the kingdom, as it might please the Most High to dispense it; and for some in riper years, who may have been allured as into the wilderness, that their Heavenly Father would be pleased to speak comfortably to them there, and give them vineyards from thence, from which, as there is a dependence from time to time on the aid of the great Lord of the vineyard, fruit may be brought forth to his praise.

"In the evening my mind was comforted in the remembrance of Job's confidence in the faithfulness of the Most High, even when under great conflict from apparent desertion:—'When he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.' I seemed in some degree enabled to take hold of this as an answer to the prayer, that the Lord would speak comfortably, &c. I hope there is no presumption in this application.

"Lord, preserve me in humility and fear, and give an increasing sense of the necessity of diligence in thy service and devotedness to thy cause, so far as anything may be called for at the hands of one so unworthy.

"*Tenth Month* 17*th.*—Addressed a few words to the boys last evening, to my own peace.

"This morning, the first part of our meeting was a time of heaviness; after this, the secret prayer arose for divine aid, and immediately my mind was brought into exercise, though without any commission to communicate.

"The remains of Levitt Edwards were interred before meeting in the afternoon, and a passage of Scripture was brought to my remembrance at the grave-side, which, with a train of reflections, I felt called upon to express, after a considerable time of silence, in the meeting afterwards.—('Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord, that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.') O, if there be anything of a further call to labour in the Lord's vineyard, may there be a close watch maintained, that the voice of the good Shepherd may be distinguished from that of the stranger; and may faithfulness in giving up to the requirings of the Most High be my favoured experience! Lord, send out thy light and thy truth; let *them* lead me; and let me not walk by the light of sparks of my own kindling.

"*Tenth Month* 27*th.*—How instructive it is to find, in the 'Life of William Allen,' that, notwithstanding his very numerous and important engagements, 'scarcely any circumstance was ever permitted to interfere with his practice of giving the first part of the morning to God. He spent about a quarter of an hour in religious retirement, and after this devoted about a quarter of an hour to reading and meditating upon the Scriptures.' I believe if I had been more constant in the discharge of the duty of retirement, I should not have so much cause as I now have to deplore my dwarfishness. I desire to be more diligent in future.

"*Eleventh Month* 8*th*.—[To his brother.] The above date reminds me that this is the twenty-second anniversary of the removal of the school to Croydon. What changes have I seen within these walls, in my stationary allotment, during that period! If I were to follow the train of reflections into which the consideration would lead, I might write page after page."

In allusion to the monetary crisis which occurred during this year, he observes:—

"What a shaking time it has been in the commercial world! You seem to have had a full share of it in the North. I hope the worst is over. It has sometimes felt to be cause of thankfulness, to be free from all this turmoil and anxiety about monetary affairs and transactions.

"*Twelfth Month* 5*th*.—Once more, under a solemn sense of divine requiring, I ventured to break the silence of our meeting in the morning. Preserve me, O Lord, from falling, on the right hand and on the left.

"*Twelfth Month* 18*th*.—During this week we have had considerable anxiety on account of the boys in the nursery. It has been a time of very general sickness. May we cherish the feeling of thankfulness for the extent to which we have been favoured to escape; and in what we have passed through, or may have to endure in this way, may there be a willingness to recognise the tender dealings of a merciful Father, who does not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men."

A good deal of illness prevailed in the school at this juncture; some of the teachers were laid by, and many of the children were attacked with measles. It was a time of much serious thoughtfulness on the part of

many, and the contriting influences of our Heavenly Father's love were, by means of this visitation, brought to bear on the minds of not a few. John Sharp thus notices their circumstances at this period :—

"*First Month 2nd*, 1848.—'When he giveth quietness, who then can make trouble? and when he hideth his face, who then can behold him? whether it be done against a nation, or against a man only.' (Job xxxiv. 29.)

"The above has been much the companion of my thoughts to-day. We have seventeen children in bed with measles, including three of our own, and four convalescent; but thus far are favoured to have no very serious case—all going on well. I think I see clearly that this dispensation of divine Providence has already been blessed. Oh that in every instance in which the Lord's chastening hand is laid upon any, the design of his wisdom and goodness may be accomplished!

"It has been the desire of my heart this day, that the present year may be more productive of good fruit than that which has preceded it. May I be kept near to that Power, by which alone preservation from evil is experienced, and an increase known of fruitfulness in the fields of offering, and of joy in the house of prayer.

"*First Month 15th.*—We have now had forty-three cases of measles, including all our own dear children; and it is surely cause for great thankfulness that hitherto we have been favoured to go on so well; nearly all are convalescent, and there are now only about six children who have not had this complaint.

"*First Month 21st.*—[To his brother.] We have been enabled to get through our trying illness thus far, with less of perplexity than might naturally be expected, and have been

strengthened, I believe, from day to day, for the daily burden and care, far beyond our deserts. In one or two instances there has been evidence of the purifying effect of this dispensation, on the minds of those affected by it, which amply compensates for a large amount of suffering and trial. I think I may say, with some degree of thankfulness, that the prevalent desire of my heart has been, not to be spared any portion of suffering it might be consistent with the will of the Supreme Disposer of events to permit to befal us; but rather that the gracious purposes of his wisdom might be fully accomplished in every instance and in every respect.

"*First Month* 22*nd*.—My thoughts and attention are far too much devoted to things of minor importance compared with the one thing needful; or rather, in the discharge of daily duties, there is too little of that turning the mind heavenward, which is implied in the precept, 'Whether ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.' There is need of much greater watchfulness over my thoughts, words, and actions, and of seeking day by day, and hour by hour, for fresh supplies of strength from the inexhaustible treasury. O what a mercy that such a privilege as this is dispensed to us, and how marvellous that we are so slow to avail ourselves of it! I am often sensible, as now, of good desires; but O, how transient are they! When shall I know more of an *abiding* in the Vine, so as to bring forth fruit to the praise of the great Husbandman?

"*Second Month* 1*st*.—Another month has run its rapid course: we have partaken of many mercies, and are now, as a family, with one or two exceptions, restored to our usual health. Desires prevail for ability to run with patience and alacrity the race set before me, watching unto prayer. If this were my constant engagement, surely my fruitfulness would greatly increase—'my profiting would appear to all'

around me; instead of which, I fear that at times I prove a stumbling-block to those over whom it is my lot to preside. Strengthen, O Lord, my feeble desires to serve thee. I long for a state of entire devotedness to thee, and of unreserved obedience and subjection to thy holy will in all things.

"*Second Month 8th.*—Dear Peter Bedford, having felt his mind attracted towards the children and teachers who have recently recovered from illness, came to spend the evening with us. After tea we sat down with twenty-four boys, and three of their teachers. We were favoured with a feeling of solemnity from the first; and our dear friend was enabled to address the objects of his tender and Christian solicitude with great freedom and power. I believe it was my portion to be in some degree covered with the spirit of prayer, and, under this feeling, a vocal offering was made.

"*Second Month 27th.*—Some ability was granted, in both meetings, to stay the mind on him who alone is worthy of all adoration, thanksgiving, and praise. The offerings in the ministry and prayer appeared to me lively, weighty, and acceptable. My own mouth is sealed, though I am not without my share of mental exercise on my own account and that of others.

"*Fourth Month.*—[To his brother.] As usual I have not much that would be satisfactory to say of myself. I seem to be plodding on from day to day in a certain beaten track, and am at times ready to doubt whether any real progress is made in the heavenward journey. I do occasionally believe it to be in the line of my duty to say a few words in our religious meetings and in this family; but these engagements are few and far between. At our last Quarterly Meeting, I was surprised to hear my name proposed as a correspondent; so that I suppose, after the Yearly Meeting,

I shall be entitled to a seat in the Meeting for Sufferings; an honour and a privilege of which I feel unworthy. I shall be glad, however, to attend as regularly as I suitably can, with due regard to home duties.

"*Fourth Month* 14*th*.—During the last two days my mind has been under no small exercise, and it appears to be in the way of my duty to attend the Quarterly Meeting at Nottingham next Third-day. I have endeavoured to cast my burden upon the Lord, and the prayer of my heart has been, and is, 'Make my way plain before me, and if thy presence go not with me, carry me not hence.' O may I be preserved, under this and every dispensation of the Lord's appointment, in watchfulness, humility, and fear, and enabled to hear and obey the secret monitions of his unflattering witness and undeceiving guide in my own mind.

Fourth Month 15*th*.—To his brother in allusion to this subject he writes:—"Truly it seems a very formidable matter for me to go expressly to attend a meeting at such a distance, where I am an entire stranger, and having so little a part, if any, in the ministry of the gospel; and yet, so abiding is the impression that duty calls me to it, that if it be my lot (as is mostly the case at home) to be engaged only in silent and secret exercise of spirit for the prosperity of Zion, I hope I shall not doubt the reality of the call. At the same time, thou wilt believe it is a great exercise of faith; and my feelings may, I think, be described, by comparing myself to one of my little pupils, to whom I may have said that I wished to see him at a stated time; who would be very apt to say, 'I wonder what master wants me for!'

"Think of me, my dear brother, for good."

In a letter to his wife from Nottingham, he writes :—

"*Fourth Month* 18*th.* — The feeling under which we parted has been, and is, comforting to me. I thought the language was secretly proclaimed: 'Rejoice, Zebulon, in thy going out, and Issachar in thy tents.' Please give my dear love to all the parlour circle. I feel the value of the sympathy of their spirits, as well as thine, in this exercise of my faith.

"*Fourth Month* 19*th.*—Thou wilt, I know, be pleased to hear that I was favoured to leave Nottingham with a peaceful mind, and relieved from the pressure of exercise that had previously been my portion. The meeting for worship was short, and my voice the only one that was heard with the outward ear. Strength was given, (and I desire to acknowledge it with reverent thankfulness,) to pour forth a prayer on behalf of that portion of the flock individually and collectively, and for various classes among them; those in the decline of life—the strong and vigorous—and the young especially—and for a blessing on all. This, and the offering of a few remarks after the queries had been answered, appeared to be all the active exercise that devolved on me.

"*Fourth Month* 23*rd.*—Received information last evening of the decease of George Lester, who left us about ten days ago in poor health. Congestion of the brain, or perhaps suffusion, appears to have been the cause of his death. He was a very delicate child, and had the measles during the winter. There is comfort to be derived from the remembrance of his docility, meekness, and general good conduct in time of health. I trust he was not unprepared for the solemn event.

"*Fourth Month* 30*th*.—A day in which a little ability to labour in the Lord's service was mercifully afforded. May it be my earnest and increasing desire to be faithful to all his requirings; to be watchful over my own spirit and conduct; and oh that he who has, as I humbly believe, graciously condescended, by the gentle intimations of his Spirit, to assign me some little portion of service in his church, may be pleased to keep me in humility and fear before him, and quicken in me from day to day, the desire to be wholly conformed to his will in all things, willing to do or to suffer — to be anything or nothing— as he who is all-wise may be pleased to appoint.

"Arriving at Chelmsford late last evening, I breakfasted this morning at J. and E. Lester's, and, after the reading, was enabled to supplicate on their behalf and that of their family, for resignation under the trial, and for the younger branches especially, that they might be preserved in the fear of the Lord, and, by submission to the transforming influences of his grace, be fitted for his service. In the meeting, words arose for expression, and ability was given to utter what appeared to be required. In the evening, attended a meeting in London, where ability was again afforded to express what arose before me, when silently waiting upon the Lord.

"*Sixth Month* 3*rd*.—For the first time I have had the pleasure and privilege of being present at all the sittings of the Yearly Meeting. The attendance has been small, but it has been a favoured time: much condescension and brotherly love have been very apparent, and the important concerns of the church, have been harmoniously conducted. I have felt that my love to our religious Society was never greater than at the present time, and I think I was never more sensible of the privilege of being a member of it.

"Though there are many causes of discouragement, there is yet a comforting evidence that the Lord is mindful of us; and I believe he will yet abundantly bless those whose hearts are open to receive his heavenly counsel, and obey him in all things.

"Be thou, O God, my Leader, Teacher, and Guide; keep me under the shadow of thy wing—in the safe enclosure of thy fear; and in watchful attention to the whispers of thy Spirit in the secret of my soul. 'Draw me, and (in the strength which thou givest) I will run after thee,' is at this time the language of my soul; may it become my abiding desire, under all the varying circumstances by which I may be surrounded.

"I had, as I thought, a little commission yesterday, to call the attention of parents and heads of families to the example of the father of the faithful. May it be my increasing concern to act in accordance with what is recorded respecting him: Gen. xviii. 19.

"*Sixth Month 9th.*—Attended the Meeting for Sufferings for the first time. My mind dwelt a little on the consideration of the dedication of those, who, from one generation to another, have been raised up and qualified for various services in the church, and especially for the performance of the duties devolving upon this body—varied and important as they are. I believe, if it should please the Almighty to spare my life a few years longer, and if preserved in watchfulness and fear, an increasing share of the discipline of our religious Society will devolve upon me. And although my services may be very insignificant, when compared with those of more gifted members, yet it may be remembered with encouragement, that a man is accepted according to that he hath, and not according to that he hath not. May I then seek increasingly to be

faithful from day to day to every manifestation of duty, and count nothing small or unimportant which the great Master may see fit to call for at my hands."

During the vacation in the Seventh Month, John Sharp attended the Ackworth General Meeting, and spent the remainder of the time principally with his relatives at Darlington. His wife joined him at the latter place, having been for a time detained at home by the illness of their little boy. John Sharp thus notices the return of the family to the school:—

"*Eighth Month* 3*rd*.—Our vacation is now nearly over; the teachers are re-assembling, and we expect the children to-morrow. It has been a time of relaxation and enjoyment to me; though, I fear, not so profitable as it might have been. I have much to be thankful for in the retrospect: the restoration of my dear little boy is among the mercies bestowed; the opportunity for social intercourse with my beloved brother has been felt a great privilege and favour; and now that we are permitted to return in health, may it be our individual and united desire to be found increasingly faithful in the discharge of our very important duties.

"During the vacation, my mouth was not opened in the ministry; but on the last evening of our tarriance at Darlington, at the house of my dear brother, I felt in some degree constrained vocally to return thanks for past and present mercies, and to commit ourselves and one another to the care and keeping of the Shepherd of Israel; supplicating also for the divine blessing on our beloved children.

"*Eighth Month* 22*nd*.—The eleventh anniversary of our marriage. May we not, in grateful remembrance of the goodness of our Heavenly Father towards us, adopt the language—'Hitherto the Lord has helped us.' Oh then,

that the residue of our days may be devoted to his blessed service, and that our concern may increase to train up the beloved children 'whom God hath given us,' as well as those of whom for a season we have the oversight and care, in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

"Sophia C. Napper [one of the teachers] left us to-day. She appears in an interesting state of mind: her health is such as to render it doubtful whether she will ever return to Croydon:—'The will of the Lord be done.' We are without a governess for the present; so that it falls to my lot to teach the girls' first-class for a short time.

"It was agreed this day, in a Committee of Friends, to recommend me to the office of clerk to the Monthly Meeting. I feel it to be a very important post, and am sensible of my own unfitness, which I pleaded as an excuse, but unavailingly. Should the Monthly Meeting confirm the choice of the committee, may it be my concern to ask wisdom of him, who giveth liberally and upbraideth not, and to seek, in humble dependence on divine aid, to discharge with faithfulness and in simplicity the duties that will thus devolve upon me.

"*Ninth Month* 13*th*.—Our ministers and elders having all gone to Kingston to attend their Monthly Meeting, their seat in our meeting was left unoccupied. I think it is good sometimes to be thus deprived of those who are made use of as instruments in the divine hand for the good of others, however highly we may value their labours, when rightly qualified to minister to our necessities.

"On this occasion my mind was under exercise, and words presented which I thought might be expressed; but I seemed to be in the condition of Saul, who had prepared a sacrifice at the bidding of Samuel, but was not to offer it till he came; and, while waiting thus to know the will of

the Great Master, there seemed no commission to open my mouth, and I remained, without condemnation, in peaceful silence.

"*Ninth Month* 22*nd*.—[To his brother.] At our Monthly Meeting yesterday, it devolved on me to take the pen as clerk. I would gladly have been excused; but the other Friends on the appointment were so united in opinion that it would be my right place, that I yielded to their views, though in opposition to my own judgment; and when the proposal was brought before the meeting for decision, it was so cordially received, that I had no way of escape. I trust the needed help will be afforded from time to time, but it seems formidable at present.

"*Tenth Month* 15*th*.—Great solemnity appeared to prevail in the silent part of our meeting this morning. After sitting about an hour and a half, I seemed nearly ready to express what had rested on my mind; when C. N. knelt and was engaged for some time in fervent supplication. I thought perhaps I should feel excused after this; but my exercise continuing, I ventured on my feet, and was enabled to give utterance to my feelings.

"*Tenth Month* 24*th*.—[To his brother.] I have, as usual, had close employment of late; but through all, a share of that soul-sustaining peace which nothing of this world can give has been my portion, very far beyond my deserts; and some little renewal has been experienced of the commission to speak well of the Lord's goodness, even in the great congregation.

"*Eleventh Month* 25*th*.—My desire is to be found faithful to the pointings of duty, and standing in my right place. For some time I have looked towards attending the meeting for worship at Southwark on a First-day morning, and Gracechurch Street in the afternoon; and it had so pressed

on my mind previous to last First-day, that I believe I should have gone, if illness in the family had not prevented. I know of no outward circumstance to prevent my going to-morrow; but in seeking for divine guidance, the way does not seem to open before me; and, unless I feel differently in the morning, I believe it will not be right for me to leave home. 'With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments.' Although I dare not appropriate the former part of this expression of the Psalmist, I think I can in sincerity adopt the petition contained in the latter. Preserve me, O God, in patience, and suffer not my faith and confidence to fail.

"*Twelfth Month* 13*th*.—Was strengthened to express in our meeting the feeling of sympathy with some in declining years, and whose bodily strength is decreasing; and to encourage the young to yield to the visitations of divine love, by which they would be enabled to choose the Lord for their portion, &c.

"*Twelfth Month* 14*th*.—United with a dear friend in an interview, first with the apprentices, and afterwards with two companies of the boys; in which counsel was freely handed to them, and there was evidence in many instances of its being well received. May the blessing of the Most High rest on this labour of love.

"*Twelfth Month* 29*th*.—[To his brother.] It was my privilege last week to spend a few minutes at the bed-side of our dear friend John Bell, and I esteemed it truly such to witness his peaceful and patient state—full of love to his friends, and resignation to his Divine Master's will, and thankful for surrounding blessings.

"When contemplating the prospect of the removal of the fathers and elders amongst us, which a few fleeting years must be expected to effect, and the scanty prospect of

a succession of standard-bearers, taken in connexion with the trials of the present day in our highly-favoured Society, —the feeling of despondency would sometimes prevail, were it not for the assurance, that it is with the Most High to save by many or by few. The consideration of these things should lead to close searching of heart, and a diligent and unremitting occupation with the talents received, whether one, two, five or ten; that in the end the inconceivably joyful summons, may, through unmerited mercy, be addressed to us individually,—'Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.'

"The close of one year and the opening of another, suggest many profitable reflections. Gratitude for past and present mercies seems loudly called for, and an increased degree of devotedness in the coming year, if spared. I apprehend these thoughts are often known to prevail at such a period; but, alas! how short-lived are these good impressions—at least, I find it so. One desire, however, recorded this time last year, has been in a small degree realized; viz., that I might be made more 'fruitful in the field of offering;' having in this a reference to the awful work, into which thou and I, in our widely different measures, have been called; yet have I great cause to bewail my dwarfishness, even in this matter. But I seem thinking aloud when thus communing with a beloved elder brother; these observations may seem better fitted for a private journal; yet in days past we have known somewhat of the sweetness of a free communion one with the other in reference to best things; and I know not why increase of years, combined with some little advancement in the Christian course, should be attended with a diminution of such intercourse; — should it not have an opposite tendency?

"One of my great privileges during the present year has been my introduction to the Meeting for Sufferings. The evils and enormities of the slave-trade and slavery have occupied much of the attention of that body, and are likely still to do so.

"*Twelfth Month* 31*st*.—My desires this day have been that I may dwell nearer and nearer to the Source of all good, and, if consistent with the divine will, may be enabled to put on a little fresh strength in the name of the Lord, and, (I trust I feel the importance of the words as I write them,) to dedicate myself afresh to the service of the Most High. Oh that, in entire renunciation of self, the government may be upon his shoulders, who is called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace."

CHAPTER XI.

1849—50. ÆT. 36—38.

ADDRESS OF THE SOCIETY ON SLAVERY—DECEASE OF S. C. NAPPER—JOURNEY WITH A FRIEND TO THE NORTH OF ENGLAND—VISITATION OF CHOLERA—ACKNOWLEDGED AS A MINISTER—VISIT TO FRIENDS OF PYRMONT AND MINDEN—EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS.

"*First Month 5th*, 1849.—At the Meeting for Sufferings it was concluded to hold a special meeting, which the country correspondents and other members should be invited to attend, in order to enter into a serious consideration of the present state of the slave-trade and slavery, and to seek for divine direction as to our duty with reference to it.

"*First Month 25th.*—Monthly Meeting at Wandsworth. Two religious concerns were laid before the meeting; Richard Barrett to pay family visits to our own Monthly Meeting, and J. F. M. to visit Cumberland and Northumberland, Westmoreland, Durham and Scotland. I felt the importance of my position as clerk, but was favoured to get through comfortably.

On the 3rd of Second Month he thus wrote to a friend:—

"You appear to have been favoured with much of ministerial labour the last few months. Thy account of these and many other matters was interesting and acceptable, and not less so thy kind and encouraging remarks respecting myself. To be interested in each other's best welfare, and to know, in any degree, that fellowship one with another

which is granted to the Lord's children, is one of our greatest privileges. However unworthy these may feel of such a designation, the Spirit does at times bear witness with their spirits, that this is their favoured portion. When my thoughts have latterly turned to thee, I have desired that thy light may not be hidden under a bushel; but rather that it may shine, as I believe it is designed to do, in the view of others, that they may thereby be led to glorify our Father who is in heaven.

"The harvest continues to be plenteous, and the labourers few. May it please the Lord of the harvest to send forth more labourers into his harvest.

"*Second Month* 23*rd.*—The special meeting respecting slavery and the slave-trade was held, and proved a solemn season. The minutes of the Meeting for Sufferings on the subject were read, and after a time of solid waiting, William Forster said he arose with fear and trembling to propose what had often been presented to his mind as a course which it might be right for the Society to take,—that of addressing the nations of Europe, especially those implicated in the traffic; setting before them our Christian testimony on the subject, 'simply, plainly, fully, and faithfully.' This proposition was deliberately considered, and with great unanimity agreed to, and a committee was appointed to prepare an address, or addresses, to the nations of Europe.

"*Second Month* 24*th.*—Received an account of dear S. C. Napper's release from suffering."

In a letter to a friend, written a few weeks previously, John Sharp remarks:—

"She appears fully sensible that her end draws near; through mercy, death seems disarmed of all terror, and she

is enabled to look with complacency to the summons that awaits her. May her faith and patience, which may yet be sorely tried, continue to hold out, even to the end. I believe we may regard her as one who has long been ripening for heaven; there were evidences of growth not to be mistaken, whilst she abode with us.*

John Sharp was prevented from attending the funeral of this dear friend, by a previous arrangement which had been made for him to accompany J. F. M. in the commencement of his religious visit to the North. On the 27th he proceeded with him to Birmingham.

"*Second Month* 28*th.*—In the early part of the meeting, it seemed my place to give expression to a little exercise of mind on account of those whose faith might, from various causes, be sorely tried."

After calling on some Friends in Birmingham, with whom they had some religious opportunities, they proceeded to Bradford, where they attended the meetings on First-day, the 4th of Third Month, and were both engaged in the ministry. Accompanying his friend thence to Darlington, John Sharp returned home on the 6th.

"*Third Month* 8*th.*—A sweet feeling of peace has been my portion since my return home, and I have felt confirmed in the belief that it has been well for me to have been thus banded with dear J. F. M. for a few days. I think I was permitted secretly to sympathize with him in his religious

* For further particulars see a notice in the *Annual Monitor* for 1850, prepared by John Sharp.

exercises; and trust I was preserved from being a hindrance in those more public engagements to which there appeared in my case to be a secret pointing, and in yielding to which I was permitted to enjoy a peaceful evidence of divine love.

"*Third Month 27th.*—Quarterly Meeting. Under a pressure of spirit, I was constrained to seek relief in vocal utterance, in an appeal especially to those in middle life and in the early years of manhood; some of whom, as I apprehend, had heard the language, secretly, but intelligibly,—'The master is come and calleth for thee;' but had not yielded full obedience to the heavenly vision.

"*Fifth Month 19th.*—Attended a special Meeting for Sufferings on the subject of slavery. An address to the sovereigns and nations professing Christianity was read and agreed to; to be carried forward to the Yearly Meeting. It is a powerful appeal. May the divine blessing rest on its circulation. William Forster read the address: at one part his emotions were too powerful to allow him to proceed, and he was obliged to pause for a short time. Thomas Arnett from Indiana was there, and evinced a lively interest in the subject.

During the vacation in this year, John Sharp and his wife spent some time very pleasantly in the Isle of Wight. He thus describes a First-day at Ventnor:—

"*Seventh Month 15th.*—Several Friends being in and near Ventnor, it was concluded to meet in C. B.'s lodgings. Twenty-five sat down in the morning, and twenty-two in the evening. I thought both these meetings were owned by the Great Head of the church. In both it appeared my place to be the first to break silence by a brief communication. R. J. appeared in supplication in the morning, followed by C. B. in testimony and supplication. C. B.

dwelt upon the parable of the ten virgins, and especially on the necessity of being prepared to hear the midnight cry. R. J., in conclusion, revived the language: May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with us all. In the evening I was concerned to speak on the necessity of ascertaining in whose service we are, and of seeking to be delivered from bondage, &c. C. B. spoke excellently on the nature and effects of faith. R. J. on the passage: 'Through much tribulation the righteous enter the kingdom.'

"*Ninth Month 7th.*—The Meeting for Sufferings was small, and held only an hour; the feelings of many Friends were much affected with the death, by cholera, of William Cash and Elizabeth Dudley. W. C. was in town on Third-day, went to his family at Hastings that afternoon, and died on Fourth-day night, or Fifth-day morning. Elizabeth Dudley died early this morning, after twelve hours' illness.

"In the early part of the meeting, dear Peter Bedford, having occasion to speak on the business, was much overcome, and alluded to the melancholy information he had just received, as the cause of his feeling almost unable to enter on the business of the day. George Stacey observed that it was indeed almost paralyzing; but he thought we should take comfort in feeling in whose hands we are, and endeavouring to go steadily forward with what might devolve upon us; remarking it was better to fall into the hand of the Lord than into the hand of man, &c.

"*Ninth Month 9th.*—Attended the interment of the remains of William Cash at Peckham at four o'clock this afternoon. In the meeting afterwards, I felt constrained to open my mouth in the language of sympathy with the mourners, and of exhortation to the meeting at large. It has of late been more frequently my lot than heretofore

to speak as a minister. Preserve me, O Lord, from any unsanctified offering, and enable me to follow thy leadings and requirings in simple faith and with unhesitating obedience.

"*Ninth Month* 10*th.*—Went to Peckham again to attend the interment of Elizabeth Dudley's remains. There was a large attendance of Friends, and several were engaged, both in testimony and supplication, at the grave-side and in the meeting.

"*Tenth Month 5th.*—During the last few days, I have been mercifully permitted to experience the sweetness of having some sense of the love of God shed abroad in the heart, and have been made partaker of a large measure of the peace that passeth the natural understanding. For this unmerited favour I desire to be thankful to the Author of all our mercies. The desire of my heart was vocally expressed in prayer to him, in the solemn assembly on First-day last, for those in the meridian of life, that every instance of the removal from works to rewards of those who have long loved and served the Lord, may be accepted as a fresh call to increased dedication, and the faithful endeavour to be found filling up our allotted measure of service or of suffering, as he may appoint. May it be my daily concern, so to walk in humility and fear before the Most High, and so to maintain the watch, as to be found faithful to that which I have desired for others, remembering the instructive language,—'I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection; lest that, by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away.

"*Tenth Month* 25*th.*—Monthly Meeting. This is a day to which I have been looking forward with feelings not easily described. I had received an intimation that the propriety of recognising in my case a call to, and qualification

for, the ministry, was about to come under the consideration of the meeting. The spirit of heaviness has been my portion under this prospect, though attended at times with much sweetness and peace. I can fully adopt the expressions of dear William Allen under similar circumstances, to this effect:—'I am now placed in a very awful situation; I am very low, and in much fear:' this was after he had been informed of the decision of the meeting in his case. May the wisdom that is from above be permitted to guide my dear friends in their decision, and then, whatever may be the result, I trust all will be well. I have turned over some of the pages of past experience, and contemplate, with adoration and gratitude, the evidences of Almighty Goodness, in protecting and preserving me thus far. It was from him, as I reverently believe, that I received in early life the secret intimation, that, if faithful, I should at some time be called to the sacred work of the ministry;—it was from him, I am also enabled to believe, that I did eventually receive the call to that work;—and it is to him that I now desire, in humility and fear, but with sincerity of heart, to devote the residue of my days. O for an increase of watchfulness over my own thoughts, over my own family, and over the large household under my charge; and may I be favoured also to watch, with increasing diligence, to discern the pointings of the divine finger to any service which may be allotted me, whether in public, or more privately; seeking daily for ability, through the renewings of divine grace, to serve the Lord acceptably, with reverence and godly fear.

"In the afternoon Peter Bedford and Richard Sterry called, by appointment of the meeting, to inform me that my name had been recorded as a minister.

"*Twelfth Month 2nd.*—An addition to my family of

another daughter took place, and my dear H. appears to be going on well, which is a further call for thankfulness to him from whom we have received many blessings. May our gratitude be evinced by an increasing desire to walk humbly and acceptably before him. Much has in various ways been committed to us, and we ought to expect that much will therefore be required.

"*Twelfth Month* 30*th*.—My mind was solemnly impressed with a sense of gratitude to our Heavenly Father, in a review of the year which is now fast drawing to a close; and I felt constrained publicly to address the throne of grace in our afternoon meeting. I believe condemnation would have been my portion, if I had not been obedient to what appeared to be in the divine appointment. I desire to commit my way unto the Lord, and to trust in him.

"*First Month* 1*st*, 1850.—Enable me, O Lord, whilst gratefully remembering thy unmerited goodness in the year that is now for ever gone, to dedicate myself afresh to thee; and keep alive the desire to serve thee faithfully and unreservedly during the remainder of my earthly pilgrimage, submitting to the guidance and government of thy Spirit, and seeking from day to day to walk humbly and watchfully before thee.

"*Second Month* 4*th*.—In a solitary walk this afternoon, my thoughts dwelt on the circumstance of this being the thirty-eighth anniversary of my birth. My mind glanced over the past years: I think there was some feeling of gratitude for present blessings, and the desire prevailed on behalf of my dear children, that they might grow up in 'good liking' before him who has been their father's God. Yes! wholly unworthy as I feel, I can testify of his goodness and mercy, which have followed me all my life long. I have abundant cause to speak well of his

name, and I desire that the residue of my days may be more fully devoted to his blessed service, in doing or suffering, according to his holy will.

"*Fourth Month 5th.*—The Meeting for Sufferings was occupied for the first hour in the consideration of a proposition from the committee who correspond with Friends in foreign parts, to appoint a few Friends to pay a visit to those who profess with us at Pyrmont and Minden. The proposition was fully united with, and it was agreed to nominate, without recording any appointment until next meeting. To my great surprise my name was mentioned; Robert Forster, Russell Jeffrey and Samuel Sturge were also nominated. I pleaded my entire want of qualification for so weighty a service; but it was left for further consideration.

"*Fourth Month 6th.*—My mind has dwelt much on the German visit. It seems a fearful thing for such a stripling to enter on the service, and I could not accept the appointment, unless it should appear right for me to do it, either from its taking a firmer hold of my own mind, or from submission to the meeting, if it should appear to be fully in accordance with the judgment of Friends. I desire to dwell under the weight of this very important subject, and to seek for best guidance as to what it may be proper for me to do in the matter.

"Similar visits to that now proposed were paid in 1816, 1822 and 1837.

"*Fourth Month 12th.*—My mind continues to be much exercised respecting the proposed visit to Germany. It is my earnest desire that, as regards my going, or not, the divine will may be done. I believe, if it be right for me to go, way will be made for it; and if not, I trust the present mental exercise will not be altogether in vain.

"*Fifth Month* 3*rd*.—Attended the Meeting for Sufferings. I pleaded, so far as I felt at liberty, to be excused from the visit to Pyrmont and Minden; but my objections were over-ruled, and therefore I must submit, and endeavour to be of a hopeful, trustful mind.

"*Fifth Month* 19*th*.—In the early part of our meeting this morning, my mind was under exercise, and I was about to give expression to what had been presented, when another Friend spoke somewhat in accordance with my own feelings: it then seemed taken from me, but returned (with some modification) towards the close of the meeting. I rose, under, as I believed, that constraining influence which I have before experienced; but in communicating what was on my mind, I seemed much left to myself, and did not get thoroughly relieved. In a little retirement in the afternoon, I endeavoured to look to the great Searcher of hearts; and having found relief in tears, I felt peaceful, and am willing to believe this may be one of the experiences that are intended to work for my good, although painful to nature. It shows my weakness and insufficiency when left to myself. I am ready to say, 'How can such a poor creature promote the Lord's work in a foreign land?' May the prayer of my soul be that which John Pemberton has recorded under a somewhat similar prospect,—'May the Lord vouchsafe to open my way, and give me faith to pursue it.'

"*Fifth Month* 26*th*.—During last week, it was my privilege to attend, for the first time, the Yearly Meeting of ministers and elders. The sight of so many experienced brethren and sisters, and some sense of the value of their services, led me to apply to myself, I hope not unprofitably, the language of Jeremiah,—'Ah, Lord God! I cannot speak; for I am a child.'

"*Sixth Month 3rd.*—I think I have been brought into a fuller sense of the responsibility of my situation as a master and a father—of the need of increased weight of spirit; and the oft-repeated lesson of the blessing and benefit of frequent retirement, has again been brought home to me. May these impressions prove permanent, and not as a morning cloud and the early dew that goeth away. This, alas! is too often my experience.

"*Sixth Month 14th.*—[To his aunt.] I quite hope to be able to visit Brighton, before setting out on my journey to the Continent, which at times feels very formidable. It would be much more agreeable to my natural inclination to spend the vacation with my family; but I have yielded to the wishes of my friends, not without some hope that it may prove to be in right ordering; though I am very sensible of my own weakness and utter insufficiency.

"I believe thy mind is in a good degree centered—thy hope being in the mercy of him, whose compassions fail not, and whose promises are sure; and, although the mind will sympathize with the poor body, as long as they continue to be united in 'the earthly house of this tabernacle,' yet, when this is dissolved, I have a comforting belief (and I doubt not thy mind is at times enabled to repose in the same,) that death will be swallowed up in victory, and the Lord God will wipe away all tears from the eyes of his ransomed and redeemed ones, and from thine, as one of this blessed number. May his preserving and protecting arm continue underneath and round about thee, during the remainder of thy pilgrimage, sustaining thee under every conflict and trial that may yet be permitted to attend thee.

John Sharp and his companions sailed for the Con-

tinent on the 11th of Seventh Month. He thus records his movements for a few days previously:—

"On the 5th of this month I attended the Meeting for Sufferings, when John Fell was added to the committee to visit Friends in Pyrmont and Minden; and a minute was adopted by the meeting, by way of certificate on our behalf, addressed to the Two-Months' Meeting. On the 6th, my dear H. and myself, with our whole family, went to Brighton for a few days. On First-day, the 7th, we attended both meetings. In the evening I had to recur to the days of my childhood, and, in tracing the good hand that had guided me thus far, to invite the young to give up their hearts to the Lord's disposal. On the 9th, we called on our dear aunt, and I was enabled vocally to supplicate on her behalf. We returned home on the 10th, and on the 11th my companions and myself proceeded on our journey. We crossed to Ostend in four hours, and proceeded the same evening to Ghent; the next day to Cologne; and arrived at Minden on Seventh-day evening.

The following letter to his wife gives a few further particulars:—

"Hotel de la Poste, Ghent, Seventh Month 11th, 1850.

"My dearest H.

"Although past eleven o'clock, I must just send thee a few lines to say that thus far we have been favoured to get on comfortably. We had a quick passage to Ostend: the weather was fair overhead, but there was considerable swell, causing the vessel to heave and roll, to our discomfort. We came forward to this place by train, and are comfortably located here for the night.

"In the course of the day my thoughts have often turned homeward with affectionate interest; but a portion of peace has been permitted me in the remembrance that this is not a path of my own choosing, and in cherishing somewhat of a hopeful trust, that, if any service be called for at my hands, strength will be mercifully afforded in the needful time. Give my dear love to our beloved children; the remembrance of their tenderness and affectionate feeling in our parting opportunity has comforted me in the retrospect. In travelling along I have earnestly desired for them, that, if spared to attain to riper years, these feelings may more and more abound, and that now, in early life, their spirits may be brought into subjection to that Power, that alone can change their hearts, and prepare them for a life of devotedness to him who has done so much for them and for us all. I need scarcely add that for thee, as well as for myself, my desires are, that we may increasingly dwell under a sense of what we owe to him, to whom we are indebted for multiplied, though unmerited mercies, and that in simple faith we may endeavour to trust in him for a continuance of his goodness. In our quiet sitting this evening, after the reading of one or two psalms, a sweetly uniting feeling was permitted, under which R. J. was enabled vocally to return thanks for the mercies of the day, and to petition for ability to perform what may devolve upon us.

The following is extracted from a letter, also written from Ghent, addressed to one of his children:—

"At Ostend we had to open our packages and have them examined; the officers hesitated about some books, but when we told them they were to be given away, they said it

was all right. We found that we had lost a quarter of an hour at Ostend by the difference in time. In coming here, we passed the town of Bruges, once containing more than 200,000 inhabitants, now reduced to 45,000. Ghent is also very much reduced; but is still a large place, containing more than 100,000 inhabitants. It is situated at the confluence of the Scheldt and the Lys, by which it is intersected so as to form twenty-six islands, and contains about eighty bridges. It is a manufacturing town; the cotton manufacture being the principal: there are evidences of its having once been more prosperous; but the houses and streets are clean and neat, and the whole place wears a pleasing aspect. Belgium is very much like England in the appearance of the country; the crops are forwarder; we saw several fields of rye yesterday in shocks, also several crops of flax and buckwheat. The land is well cultivated; and, although very sandy, is rendered productive by industry. Vegetables and fruits abound, and they send many to England; Flemish cherries in particular are rather celebrated. As our friends have appointed me to be their paymaster, I have to make purchases, &c., and find it rather perplexing. I went last evening into a shop to buy some provision for the way. I handed the woman a five-franc piece, and she put down a quantity of small change, and appeared amused at my not being able for some time to decide whether it was right; but people are very civil, and, being able to speak a little French, we get on pretty well.

"*Seventh Month* 14*th.* — Attended the meeting for worship at Minden in the morning, and the Preparative Meeting in the afternoon. R. J. and myself had to address those assembled in the morning, and R. J. appeared in supplication. In the afternoon I had to draw their attention

to the importance of the right observance of the First-day of the week, and the value of the practice of the family reading of the Holy Scriptures. In the evening we visited the family of Jacob Rasche, and R. J. and myself gave expression to our feelings on their behalf. On all these occasions David Peitsmeyer was our interpreter."

"Hotel Stadt Bremen, Minden, Seventh Month 15th, 1850.

"My dearest H.

"We left Cologne early on Seventh-day morning, the 13th. The trains did not allow of our calling at Dusselthal Abbey on our way; so we proceeded at once to Minden, and arrived here at about a quarter before five. The day's journey was, I suppose, about 160 miles. The weather was dull and wet till about noon, and then cleared up, and has since continued fair: it is now very hot. From Cologne to this place we had a second-class carriage to ourselves; and, travelling through a country very similar to our own in many parts, there was nothing to remind us that we were out of England, except on our arrival at the stations. These second-class carriages in Prussia are equal to our first-class; in Belgium they are inferior to our second. The latter part of the journey was more diversified, and the scenery much more pleasing. A few miles before arriving at Bremen, the railway passes through a natural opening in a range of Westphalian hills, called Porta Westphalica. It can be seen from Minden, and has an interesting appearance. Minden is a strongly-fortified town, and abounds with soldiers. We had a pleasant walk by the river (Weser) on Seventh-day evening, which was very refreshing after three days' close travelling.

"Yesterday was the commencement of our services here, and I feel it to be cause for thankfulness that so far we have

been favoured, I trust I may say, with a little help from the sanctuary, and have been enabled to proceed harmoniously and comfortably. Our meeting began at ten, and was attended by nearly all the members, and a few others. Some ability was afforded to labour among them, and I trust we can unite in the feeling expressed by one of our number, that it was a solid meeting. The Preparative Meeting was held at three in the afternoon: this, and a conference with some of the Friends respecting their stock of books, occupied two or three hours. The business was conducted in a solid, interesting manner. John Rasche seems to be much esteemed by his friends, and exercises much of a pastoral care over them. He was the clerk to the meeting."

"*Seventh Month* 15*th*.—This day was spent in calling upon the Friends of Minden, and in each family we had a time of retirement, in which it devolved on R. J. and myself to be the mouthpiece of the deputation. After a conference with John Rasche, we proceeded to the house of Julius Meyer, an umbrella maker, who has a wife and six children. He is one who has joined the Society by convincement, and is now a zealous Friend. I had to remind him of Elijah in the cave, and to direct his attention to the still, small voice. R. J., 'Suffer the little children,' &c.

"We next called upon Adolphe Günter, a tailor, who has a wife and seven children; he is also a convinced Friend. After R. J. had addressed them, I had to revive the salutation, 'Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity,' &c.

"Our interpreter then took us to his own house, where we sat with him and his wife; they have two little children. After I had addressed them ('There is a time for growth,

and a time for bearing fruit, &c.), R. J. was engaged in supplication on their behalf.

"In the afternoon we visited Herman Grône and his wife, who are now under convincement, and a committee of the Two-Months' Meeting is appointed to visit them. He is a carpenter by trade. I had to speak to them on the spiritual nature of the Christian dispensation:—'This, then, is the message,' &c.; and R. J. on baptism and the supper, &c.

"Calling upon Emilie Rasche, R. J. had to revive the admonition, 'Prepare to meet thy God.' Her brother John Rasche, jun., is not at home at present.

"From hence we went to see Ernst Peitsmeyer, jun., and his wife, to whom we were both engaged to extend counsel. After tea we had a religious opportunity in the family of Christian Schelp, in which we were similarly engaged, and I had to approach the throne of grace on their behalf in vocal supplication. Thus ended this interesting and exercising day, in which we were favoured with a little help from the sanctuary, far beyond my expectation, and still more beyond our deserts.

On the 16th they visited Ernst Peitsmeyer, and in the afternoon called on some simple-hearted people, who lived in a neighbouring village, and occasionally attended meetings. On the 17th they were present at the usual week-day meeting at Minden, and in the afternoon proceeded to Pyrmont. Some of these circumstances are alluded to in a letter to his brother, written from the latter place.

"*Seventh Month* 18*th*.—We had about thirteen religious opportunities in the families of Friends in Minden, in

nearly all which, as well as in the two meetings for worship (on First and Fourth-days), R. J. and myself were engaged in vocal as well as mental exercise. It has felt, and does feel, to me, to be an awful thing thus to go from house to house on such an engagement; and now, on coming to Pyrmont, I feel afresh the force of the words, 'Who is blind but my servant, or deaf as my messenger that I sent?' yet, in grateful remembrance of past mercies, I desire to be still of a trustful mind. When the prospect of this service was before me, the prayer was often raised in my heart,—'Lord, if thy presence go not with us, carry us not hence;' and whilst engaged in the prosecution of it, it has been my desire, that we may be so preserved in humility and watchfulness, that the language may not be applicable,—'They made me keeper of the vineyards, but my own vineyard have I not kept;' and that when we have preached to others, we ourselves may not be cast away.

"One of our visits reminded me so forcibly of thy descriptions of your labours in Norway, that I am inclined to enter a little more into detail. We left Minden on Third-day at noon for Rehme, a watering-place of considerable resort; there we hired a conveyance to take us to Korsmeyer, among the Westphalian mountains, to see three individuals—a man, his wife, and a female sometimes employed by them—who were visited by L. M. Hoag, P. Bedford and Thomas Norton, jun., when in these parts. They live in a secluded part of the country, and their dwelling may, I suppose, be regarded as a specimen of the country life of people of that class in Germany. On our way thither we looked over a school at Vlotho, which interested us as one of those Institutions provided by the Prussian Government for the education of its subjects.

There were three or four hundred children, boys and girls, under the care of a 'rector,' an intelligent man, assisted by three teachers. There was evidently some vigorous instruction, but we had to regret our inability to speak the German language, on this, as on many other occasions.

"Proceeding towards Korsmeyer, we left our conveyance at an inn by the road-side, and walked about three-quarters of a mile to the farm-house. On our arrival being announced by their two dogs, most of the household turned out to look at us, and we were probably as much objects of curiosity to them as they were to us. We found them chiefly engaged in the various processes through which the flax passes, from the time of its being gathered to its being woven. The master of the house was from home, as was also their assistant, greatly to the disappointment of the hospitable mistress, who would have us stay all night. She was a strong, masculine-looking woman, and attired in the peasant working costume. We had to deplore the want of cleanliness. Having passed the cow-house, &c., all under one roof, we came to what would, I suppose, be called in the Orkneys the 'Ben-en' [Better end], where, without asking many questions, we were soon seated at a table, on the middle of which was placed a bowl of milk, and being supplied with a spoon and plate each, and a ladle for the milk, with abundance of white and black (rye) bread, we soon sat down—six hungry men, including our guide—to a hearty meal. In the meantime our hostess sent for her husband, although we assured her we could not wait till his return; and while partaking of her hospitality, we asked her some questions through our interpreter. She informed us that the three sit down alone and in silence on First-days, occasionally attending the meeting at Minden; but it is far to go. She deplored her want of closer connexion with

the Society; but our Friends at Minden have not as yet seen their way to receive them into membership. There is much of the activity of the creature; but in a religious opportunity she evinced a tender feeling.

"The other female came to the meeting at Minden the next morning, having set off at five o'clock to walk there. Another poor woman also walked about seven miles on a very hot day to get to the meeting. We had a sitting with her afterwards, and she told us she did not know of any strangers being at the meeting; she is so weak in body that she can seldom come; but she felt that she must come that morning, and could not put her feelings by.

"We left Minden soon after meeting yesterday, and after eight hours' ride (thirty-three English miles), through a beautiful country, we arrived here safely last evening.

"*Pyrmont, Seventh Month 20th.*—[To his wife.] We visited two young women on Fifth-day evening, the daughters of Diedrich Seebohm, their father and mother being both deceased; and yesterday we spent at Friedensthal (Peace Dale) a lovely spot, and, as regards the natural features of the country, very well named. Our feelings were brought into varied exercise in our visits to those who profess with us. It is well for us that we do not see very far before us: I had no idea of what would devolve upon us in the prosecution of this service. Since coming here, we have sat with about eight families or individuals; and although it has been very humiliating to me to be thus engaged, and more of an act of faith than I can express, yet I may thankfully acknowledge that we have not been left to ourselves, but have been mercifully helped along, and have been enabled, I may say, to my humbling admiration, to break a little bread from house to house.

"*First-day, Seventh Month 21st.* — The meeting this

morning realized the description given by our dear friend Peter Bedford: a large number of persons came in, and several continued to enter and to leave the meeting most of the time, producing considerable unsettlement [Pyrmont being a place of much resort, on account of its mineral waters]. It seemed my place to address the assembled company in the early part of the meeting. R. J. followed; and when he sat down, many of the strangers left. Being informed that the meeting was not over, many others sat quietly, and the remainder of the time we were more settled. R. J. was engaged in supplication, and John Rasche in testimony.

"In the evening we had a more settled opportunity with the Friends at their Preparative Meeting, in which it appeared my place to supplicate for various classes among them. The substance was afterwards given in German, by John Rasche.

"We had the young Friends of Pyrmont to tea, and an interesting parting religious opportunity followed, in which Luise Seebohm interpreted. We have our seasons of depression, as well as of rejoicing, in some degree; we have need to be taught that we have no might of our own; nevertheless, in the needful time we are not left destitute of help.

"*Seventh Month* 22*nd*.—We returned to Minden, and had the young men to spend the evening with us at our hotel.

"*Seventh Month* 23*rd*.—The Two-Months' Meeting was held at six o'clock this evening. After the business of the meeting had been gone through, a time of solid quiet followed, and I had to address the Friends present on the simile of the body and its many members, not having all the same office, &c; and to commend them to the grace of God, referring to Paul's address to the elders of the Ephesian church. R. J. followed in harmony with what

had been expressed. R. F. also added a few words in confirmation. I then addressed a short parting salutation to them. 'Finally, brethren, farewell,' &c. R. J. was engaged in vocal supplication, and, after a solemn pause, the meeting broke up at about nine o'clock.

'*Seventh Month 24th.*—Feeling now quite clear of this place, we proceeded to Dusseldorf; spent three or four hours at Dusselthal Abbey, but were disappointed at finding Mary Ann Murray was not at home: thence to Cologne to lodge.

"*Seventh Month 25th.* — Had a walk about Cologne; called at the Depôt of the Bible Society, &c., then went on to Aix-la-Chapelle; went to see the Town-hall, and afterwards ascended a hill to the Bel-vi-dere, where we had a charming view, and enjoyed spending a quiet hour together. We then took the train to Liége.

"*Seventh Month 26th.*—Leaving Liége at six, we had a delightful journey, by steam-boat, up the Meuse to Namur, about fifty miles; it occupied about nine hours. The beauties of nature were combined with the evidences of the industry of man, the country abounding with factories, &c.; and the day being delightfully fine, we were quite prepared to enjoy the scenery, which in some parts has a miniature resemblance to the Rhine. Having dined at Namur we proceeded to Douai, arriving there at about eleven.

"*Seventh Month 27th.*—S. S. left us at Douai, and we proceeded to Calais. Had a rather rough passage to Dover; left that place at six, and I arrived at home at half-past nine.

"In the retrospect, I may say, that I went out poor, and returned empty; but, through divine goodness and mercy, we were not left to ourselves in the time of need. A little

help was granted us from the sanctuary, and a degree of ability to labour beyond what I could have asked or thought; for which my soul desires, in reverent gratitude, to return thanks to our Almighty Helper for past favours, and to commit myself, and all who are near and dear to me, to his blessed disposal, desiring that he will be pleased to work in us, both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

"*Eighth Month 2nd.*—At the Meeting for Sufferings our report was presented, which appeared to give general satisfaction. R. J. said a few words acknowledging that while it had been our desire not to hurt any living or green thing in the minds of those whom we had visited, yet 'the grace of our God was exceeding abundant,' in enabling us to minister among them; or to this effect. I added a simple testimony to the goodness of him, on whom, under a sense of weakness, we had endeavoured to cast our care, and had to testify to his faithfulness in extending from day to day a renewal of help and ability to labour, for which gratitude and praise are due to him.

TO HIS DAUGHTER.

"Eighth Month 23rd, 1850.

"My beloved M. H.

"Whilst thou art enjoying a little innocent recreation (as I hope it may be considered) with thy companions, on this the twelfth anniversary of thy birthday, I feel my mind engaged in desires for thy eternal welfare. I long for thee, my dear, that if years are added to thy mortal existence, each of them may bear evidence that the work of religion has been begun in thy heart and is going forward. If this is the case, a growth in grace will be witnessed, and the hearts of thy parents will be cheered, (if they are permitted to see it), in believing that there is an increased relish for heavenly things, and consequently

greater meetness to be a partaker of those joys that will endure for ever.

"Let it be thy daily care, my dear girl, to lift up thy heart in prayer to him, from whose all-seeing eye nothing can be hid, to preserve thee from temptation, and to give thee ability to do what is right in his sight; and let it be thy practice, on retiring to rest, to review the actions of the day; and, when made sensible of having done wrong, to implore his forgiveness for the sake of the dear Saviour, who laid down his precious life as a sacrifice for the sins of the whole world.

"Be very careful to attend to those feelings in thy own mind, by which thou art made uncomfortable when thou hast not done right, or peaceful when thou hast been obedient to known duty. These secret intimations are proofs of the love of thy Heavenly Father, who thus invites thee to forsake every evil thing, and to pursue those which will bring present peace, and lead to future and everlasting happiness.

"Nothing that concerns thee could give me greater joy than to believe that thou art one of the lambs of Christ's fold, desiring above all things to love, serve and obey him who has done so much for thee. Canst thou adopt the language—

'Tis a point I long to know,
Oft it causes anxious thought,
Do I love the Lord, or no,
Am I his, or am I not?'

"Let this letter occupy thy serious thoughts in quiet retirement; it contains the expression of feelings on thy behalf, which often have a place in the mind of

"Thy affectionate father,

"JOHN SHARP."

"*Eighth Month* 31*st*.—Not quite so much burdened with a multiplicity of cares during the past week; but in such a sphere as mine in this family there is always abundant room to labour. May it be increasingly my care to drop a word in season privately, as ability is afforded, to any of those under my charge, when suitable opportunities present, or circumstances appear to call for it.

"*Twelfth Month* 22*nd*.—[To a friend.] I feel deeply interested in the view presented by thy last of the state of thy mind, and earnestly desire that all the Lord's gracious purposes respecting thee may, in his own time, be accomplished. Before this is experienced, however, there may be many deep conflicts and baptisms; but shrink not, my dear friend, from suffering: as there is a willingness to bear all the turnings and overturnings of the Lord's hand upon thee, he will carry on the work of purification and refinement; and it is as this great work is effected, that the ability is known to offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness; 'an offering that shall be pleasant unto the Lord as in the days of old, and as in former years.'

"Although we have had but little personal or epistolary intercourse, I have for some time been comforted in the belief that the hand of the Lord has been laid upon thee for thy good; and I believe the feelings of thy mind have been such as prompted the Psalmist to say,—'I will go into thy house with burnt offerings—I will pay thee my vows, which my lips have uttered, and my mouth hath spoken, when I was in trouble.' Well: may he who will not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax, continue mercifully near thee, strengthen, support and comfort thee in every hour of trial and temptation, and enable thee to rejoice as on the banks of deliverance. In

order to this, patience must have its perfect work. 'I waited patiently for the Lord, and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up, also, out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings; and he hath put a new song into my mouth, even praise unto our God.' "

CHAPTER XII.

1851—1852. ÆT. 38—40.

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS AND JOURNAL—VISIT TO THE SOUTH OF FRANCE.

"*First Month 9th*, 1851. [To his aunt].—I hope thou continues in tolerable health; the weather has not as yet been very severe; but I have no doubt thou art sometimes brought to feel, that with the lengthening of thy life to the 'fourscore years,' there is much to be endured of 'labour and sorrow;' so that the cry may sometimes be ready to ascend, under a sense of weakness and the pressure of manifold infirmities, to him who is a God hearing and answering prayer, 'O Lord, cast me not off in the time of old age: forsake me not when my strength faileth.' Yet at other seasons, when favoured with a little renewal of help from the sanctuary, ability may be experienced to commit thy way unto the Lord, and to trust in him, adopting the language,—'I know in whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.' How encouraging in low seasons is the remembrance of some of the precious promises left on record by the evangelical prophet:—'Fear not: for I have redeemed thee; I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned, neither

shall the flame kindle upon thee.' And again,—'Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on her son? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. I have graven thee on the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me.' These, and many other promises made to the church, are, at times, brought home and applied to the circumstances of believers individually; and when applied by the Spirit of Truth, do they not often refresh the soul as a brook by the way? Let us then, my dear aunt, seek to commend ourselves, and one another, to the tender mercies of him, of whose faithfulness we have had abundant proofs in days gone by, and by whom we have been preserved to the present hour.

"*First Month* 12*th*.—Accompanied dear Peter Bedford to Reigate, to attend the interment of the remains of our friend J. P., whose decease was awfully sudden. He was apparently in vigorous health, almost to the moment of dissolution. He was sitting with his daughter, when he suddenly fell into her arms, breathed about three times, and then expired! The cause was supposed to be an enlargement of the heart. There was a solemn feeling at the grave-side, when A. M. was engaged in the endeavour to comfort the mourners, and to stimulate survivors to increased diligence, &c. Much solemnity was spread over the meeting afterwards, and D. P. H. was engaged in the ministry, after I had endeavoured to relieve my mind of a little exercise on behalf of the youth and others. E. H., on the bended knee, was then engaged in supplication and thanksgiving.

"*Third Month* 26*th*. [To his aunt. Alluding to his attendance of the Quarterly Meeting].—It is truly a privilege to be present on such occasions, and to unite, as ability may be afforded, in religious exercise and travail of spirit on

account of ourselves and others, as well as for the promotion of the cause of truth and righteousness in the earth. Although such as are prevented by age and infirmities from partaking in this privilege may be ready, in moments of depression, to adopt the mournful language, 'I am as a sparrow alone on the house-top,' &c., yet, in boundless compassion, he, whose tender mercies are over all his works, does not wholly forsake these, but enables them at times to hold sweet, though secret, communion with him in their solitary situations, and also to lift up their heads in hope, and, confiding in his unfailing mercy and goodness, to rejoice in the belief, that when the remaining conflicts and trials allotted them shall have been passed through, their blessed portion will be that of an inheritance with the saints in light, eternal in the heavens. I trust this animating prospect continues to cheer and console thy mind at seasons, although, at other times, thy faith may appear weak, and thy strength small."

On the 16th of Seventh Month, John Sharp notices the birth of his youngest child.

"*Ninth Month 9th.*—Edward Smith and Samuel Bowly had a meeting with Friends on the subject of temperance; their addresses were convincing and intelligent. Twenty-three Friends signed the simple pledge,—'We agree to abstain from all intoxicating drinks as a beverage.'"

John Sharp had for many years been a pledged total abstainer, being anxious on this very important point to set a good example to those under his care. He was induced to take this step, in the first instance, from a belief that Christian self-denial calls for this sacrifice,

for the sake of those who are unhappily led into excess; and he never found occasion to alter these views.

"*Ninth Month* 11*th*.—To his daughter (at school). I think the manner of spending First-days is well arranged. I should like thee always to have a book of a religious character in reading, and trust thou wilt be diligent in the private perusal of that best of books, the Bible; and the foremost desire of my heart on thy account, my beloved child, is, that its precious contents may be blessed to thee, making thee 'wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus?' I long for thee (more than the acquisition of outward knowledge, highly as it is to be valued,) that thou mayst be from day to day a learner in the school of Christ. 'Learn of me,' said he; 'for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls.'

"*Eleventh Month* 2*nd*.—Many instances have recently occurred, of the removal from works to rewards of those who have been devoted to the Lord's service; thus leaving vacant places in the church. Oh that there may still be a succession raised up, of those who may be strengthened, by the Lord of the harvest, to proclaim the truth as it is in Jesus, and to uphold and bear testimony to those spiritual views of the gospel of Christ which have hitherto been professed and maintained by our favoured Society. 'Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years.'

"The Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; but there must be a willingness on our part to submit to his crucifying, refining, forming power, that we may become vessels to his praise, bearing the inscription of holiness. Be pleased, O Lord, to purge away the dross from my still polluted heart. Cleanse thou me from secret faults. Let

the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer.

"*Eleventh Month* 30*th*.—I have craved for myself that I may walk more circumspectly, and maintain closer union and communion with him in whom all fulness dwells; daily watching unto prayer, and seeking to know and do my Heavenly Father's will in the renunciation of my own.

"*Twelfth Month* 31*st*.—And now, at the close of another year, in which I have partaken largely of the Lord's mercies, I desire to cherish the feeling of thanksgiving and praise to him for his goodness, even to me; and may it be increasingly my care to live so near to his preserving power, and to walk so watchfully before him, as to be enabled to become more fruitful in the field of offering.

"*First Month* 4*th*, 1852.—A valued friend, who attended our meeting for worship at Croydon this morning, commenced a striking address with the words—'Faith leads from self to Christ.' He dwelt much on the work of religion in the heart, the convictions of the Holy Spirit, not of ourselves, but evidences of the love of God to us, leading to repentance, faith, conversion, complete redemption, introducing into true church membership, and bringing into the experience of really having a part in Christ; so that Christianity becomes to us, not a mere fact that occurred 1800 years ago, but the power of God unto salvation. He urged the absolute need of our experiencing this for ourselves, even as a preparation for heaven.

"He spoke impressively on the duty of prayer. Is there any one in this assembly, who has dared to go on day after day, week after week, month after month, and it may be year after year, without ever bending the knee, or bowing the heart to him without whom we can do nothing? if so, it

is, surely, an alarming proof of the soul's deadness, or forgetfulness, or else of its presumption. How canst thou, young man, go forth into this world, so full of enemies, without putting on thy spiritual armour? How canst thou suppose that in thy own strength thou canst engage successfully in this warfare? He spoke not of formal, heartless prayer, but of the pouring forth of the soul under the influence of the spirit of prayer and supplication. He had often thought that if all our young men were diligent in the performance of this duty, not only lifting up their hearts to their Maker, whilst engaged in their various daily occupations; but if at set times, and especially every morning and evening, in retirement of soul, they opened their hearts to those desires after good which were the preparation for prayer, we should no longer have to lament the diminution of our numbers; but there would be living witnesses raised up, who would not merely know these things by hearsay, but be made experimentally acquainted with their reality. In reference to the obligations under which we are brought by our Saviour's sacrifice upon the cross for our sakes, he said emphatically—'You cannot *un*crucify the Son of God—you cannot *un*pay the debt which has been paid for you—you cannot *un*purchase yourselves. Ye are not your own; ye are bought with a price,' &c.

"*Second Month 4th, Morning.*—I have now passed forty years in the wilderness of this world. Am I still in the wilderness as regards the condition of the immortal soul? I trust, through the abundant and unmerited mercy of my God, some deliverance from the bondage of sin and Satan, and somewhat of the enjoyment of the liberty of the Lord's children, have been experienced; but there remaineth to be attained a more perfect rest, and the exhortation is brought to remembrance while I write:—'Let us therefore fear, lest,

a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.'

Evening.—Through the course of this day, my mind has dwelt much on the circumstance of its being the fortieth anniversary of my birth. I have at intervals been favoured with a sweet feeling of comfort and peace, under some sense of the Lord's goodness, and the tribute of thanksgiving and praise arises in my heart under a sense thereof, and of my own unworthiness. I have again read with interest, and I hope instruction, the beautiful review of her past life and experience made by the late Maria Fox, on completing her fortieth year; and while feeling how very far I fall short of the attainment of those Christian graces that adorned her character, I am enabled with gratitude to adopt some of her expressions, which refer to the faithfulness and the multiplied mercies of our Heavenly Father.

"Strong are my desires that he will be pleased to perfect that which concerneth me; to complete the work which he has mercifully begun in my heart; to cleanse it from every defilement; to make me more watchful, more faithful, more filled with love to God and man; and enable me to be entirely given up to his disposal, devoted to his blessed service, and resigned to his holy will in all things.

"And grant, O Lord, that by the power of thy Spirit, and the operation of thy grace, our beloved children may become thine by adoption, and that it may be the first desire of their hearts to love, serve, fear, honour and obey thee.

"*Third Month 5th.*—Although the usual time for retiring to rest is gone by, I feel disposed to avail myself of a quiet hour to enter upon record some of the feelings and exercises that have attended my mind during the past few weeks, which I desire to do under an humbling sense of the goodness of the Most High, and of my own unworthiness.

On the fourth of last month I completed my fortieth year. My mind was much clothed during that day with the feeling of thankfulness to him, who has graciously sustained me hitherto, and granted me numberless blessings and mercies: strong desires were raised for an increase of watchfulness, devotedness and resignation to the divine will in all things.

"At the Meeting for Sufferings on the 6th, the propriety of appointing a few Friends to visit those who profess with us in the South of France, was solidly considered. I thought this was a matter in which I could do no more than offer the secret, silent prayer, for divine direction and help; but, while thus engaged, I found that it would conduce to my peace to give vocal expression to my feelings; and the words then uttered were so deeply impressed on my mind, and have so often revived since, that I believe I could now record them nearly verbatim, as follows:—'O Lord God Almighty! art not thou God in heaven, and rulest not thou over all the kingdoms of the earth? Thou hast made heaven and earth! Thou knowest the circumstances and the wants of all thy poor dependent children, the world over, however situated and wherever scattered; and of thy sufficiency thou art able to supply all their need, without the agency or instrumentality of man; but seeing that thou art pleased, at times, to make use of thy unworthy creatures for the accomplishment of thy own blessed purposes, permit us, we pray thee, to ask counsel of thee at this time, with regard to our duty to those who are at present the objects of our consideration; whether it may consist in continued secret exercise or in active service; and if it should be consistent with thy will that we should go forward in the way proposed, either now or at a future time, be pleased to give the spirit of judgment to them that sit in judgment, enabling them to see and discriminate

those on whom thy holy anointing hand is laid, to qualify them for the service; that these, going forth in thy fear, and in dependence upon thee, under a sense of their own helplessness, may find thee to be, as thou hast ever been, to those who endeavour to serve thee in sincerity, a present helper in every needful time.'

"A few days after this meeting, as my mind was turning to a prospect of a few days' recreation, which I hoped to enjoy during the Fourth Month, this service rose before my mental view as a substitute, and from that time I dared not look to the plan I had formed for myself; but the apprehension that I might have to unite with the deputation continued and increased.

"At our Monthly Meeting on the 19th, an exercise attended my mind during the meeting for worship, and continued to rest upon it as the business of the second meeting proceeded, notwithstanding the attention required of me, as clerk, to the concerns of the meeting; till towards the close I felt strengthened to say that I believed it right to pay a short visit to the women's meeting. Way was readily made. It was an act of faith; but the needed help was mercifully granted, and it was followed by the rich reward of peace.

"As the time for the Meeting for Sufferings approached, my burden became heavier, till at length I came to the conclusion that, if the way should open for me, I must not withhold the offering. At the meeting this day the subject was solidly considered, and at length the conclusion was come to that a nomination should take place. Joseph T. Foster was proposed—then Robert Alsop—then Thomas Chalk; there it was thought best to stop, unless any other Friend felt it required of him to offer his services. I had previously concluded that unless my name were mentioned,

or such an invitation as this were extended, I might be excused from the offering; and the opportunity for making it seemed nearly gone. I felt, however, that the time was come for me in simplicity to cast myself upon the meeting, by saying how it had been with me. I observed that although, at the previous meeting, my feelings had been deeply interested, I had not then the remotest apprehension that any part of the service would devolve upon me; but that soon after that meeting it had taken hold of my mind, and had so continued with me, by day and by night, in solitary places and when engaged in active duties, that since the encouragement afforded by the remarks latterly made, I felt that I could do no other than offer my name, although sensible that my case was comparable to that of having only a handful of meal in the barrel, and a little oil in the cruse, and perhaps scarcely that, &c. My name was at once added, and two or three Friends said that it had been present with them before I had expressed my feelings. In the retrospect, I am favoured with a quiet trust, that if the way should open for me to go, the Lord will graciously condescend to be my Helper: at present, the names are not recorded on minute, but left for confirmation or otherwise next month. May I be preserved in watchful dependence on him, without whom I can do nothing. I have hitherto been mercifully kept free from doubts respecting this requiring, though I have some fears; these may have the effect of keeping me humble, which is truly needful.

"*Third Month 7th.*—Several Friends have encouraged me with reference to the proposed visit to France; my desire is to abide in patience, faith, watchfulness, and humility.

"An expression in one of Thomas Scattergood's letters took much hold of my mind:—'Be in earnest to do the

day's work in the day time.' May I dwell profitably on the consideration of this exhortation, and be stimulated in the remembrance of it from day to day to increased diligence and faithfulness.

"*Fourth Month 2nd.*—At the Meeting for Sufferings the appointment to visit the South of France was confirmed, and the arrangement made to leave on Third-day morning next, the 6th of this month, for Folkestone. The service appears increasingly weighty in the prospect of so soon leaving home; and may I be enabled to walk very watchfully before the Lord, seeking his preservation and guidance, from day to day, and from hour to hour, and endeavouring in faithfulness and simplicity to do his holy will.

Among the letters of encouragement and sympathy which John Sharp received from his friends on this occasion, the following is selected for insertion, as expressing the feelings of one, whose kind and sympathising heart was ever ready to enter into feeling with those circumstanced as he was, and who was summoned, so very nearly at the same period, to exchange the service of her Lord on earth, for a far higher and more glorious service in the courts above.

"Dear Friend J. S.

"Under an apprehension that thy time to-day will be very fully occupied, I avail myself of pen and ink to convey to thee the desire I feel, in the prospect before thee, that thou mayst be enabled, in confiding trust in divine favour, to cast thy dear family, and all thy responsibilities, into the care and keeping of Israel's unslumbering Shepherd; and that thou mayst experience thy bow to abide in strength,

and the arms of thy hands to be made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob. But as the service required may vary in character, it may be profitable to bear in mind that our blessed Lord condescended to wash his disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded; expressly setting us an example to perform the most menial offices one for another. And if it fall to thy lot, in going from house to house, to visit any in deep poverty and affliction, where a small gift may prove acceptable, I leave thee at liberty to hand it on my account, as thou mayst incline, but without any mention of my name. With desire for thy preservation on every hand, and that a gracious Providence may so bless the labour of love performed, that those who sow and those who reap may be permitted to rejoice together,

"I remain, thy sincere friend,

"*Fourth Month 5th*, 1852. "M. STERRY."

The narrative of the incidents and labours attendant on this journey, may be best supplied by the following extracts from letters written to his relatives and friends in England :—

"Hotel Bedford, Paris, Fourth Month 7th, 1852.

"MY DEAREST H.

"I avail myself of the first opportunity of informing thee of our safe arrival in this great city. After leaving thee yesterday morning, we had an agreeable journey to Folkestone, where we were joined by J. T. F. The sun shone brightly, and the sea was calm during the first part of the voyage, but we afterwards encountered a fog, or rather mist, from the North Sea, and there was a little increased motion from a fresh wind; but we may be said to

have had a favourable passage, and I quite enjoyed it. The town of Boulogne and the surrounding country were enveloped in mist. We were detained an hour and a half by the examination of the luggage. After proceeding a short time on our journey, the sun again broke out, and we had a very pleasant ride to Paris. Our carriage was occupied throughout by ten passengers, English and Americans. We arrived at Paris a little before eleven. After another considerable detention, we received our luggage, and proceeded hither by omnibus. There must have been a change of wind and temperature, I think, as well as a change of clime; as it was not even chilly when riding near midnight on the outside of the omnibus to our hotel.

"I visit you often in mental vision, and trust you are favoured to be getting on comfortably. As to myself, the words continue to rest much with me:—'I go bound in the spirit, not knowing the things that shall befal me;' nevertheless my mind is mercifully preserved in calmness, and I am permitted to feel a quiet trust that light will be given to see, and strength to perform, in the needful time, whatever service may be called for at my hands. I seek not great things, but crave for ability to be enabled to be faithful in the little. I have a sweet remembrance of the feeling that appeared to pervade the family before leaving home, and of the kind sympathy and encouragement of many of my dear friends.

"Nismes, Fourth Month 12th, 1852.

"My thoughts often turn towards thee and the dear children, and the whole family, whom I desire day by day to commit to the good keeping of the unslumbering Shepherd. May his blessing, that maketh truly rich, still rest upon you, and his protecting and preserving care be round about you!

"Thus far we have been favoured to get on safely, and although the query often arose on our way hither, on this wise: Why am I thus leaving my dear wife to 'serve alone,' and quitting the scene of my daily labour, and the important duties of the responsible situation in which I have been placed? yet there was nothing that accompanied this enquiry which cast any shade upon the view I have had, that this was, for a short season, to be the place of mental exercise, and, according to ability afforded, of actual service for the good of souls. So here we are, endeavouring, I trust, while sensible of much weakness, to fulfil the service allotted us by the church, in the ordering, as I humbly trust, of our great and ever-living Head.

"My last was written at Paris, which place we left on Fourth-day morning, and arrived at Chalons late in the evening. We dined on the road at a table d'hôte, at which ten courses were handed to us in twenty minutes; potage-à-ris, fish, beef, fowl, fried potatoes, maccaroni, preserved apples, cheese, &c. We proceeded down the Saone on Fifth-day, leaving Chalons in a steam-packet at seven, and reaching the magnificent city of Lyons at two. The Saone is a much larger river than I expected,—about as broad at Chalons as the Thames at Battersea. The traffic on the Rhone and Saone consists chiefly in the conveyance of merchandise up the river, the boats taking passengers on their return. The almond trees, now in full blossom, some pink, but more white, are conspicuous objects, and as we advanced southward we observed the progress of vegetation. At Lyons we found the heat oppressive,—a striking change in the course of a few days; and since that, we have had alternations of heat and cold, according to situation and circumstances, as I will relate. Lyons is a very fine city, especially in the neighbourhood of its noble rivers. The

houses on the left bank of the Saone form a crescent, and the Rhone flows through the city more to the south. The tongue of land between the two rivers is the most densely populated; the streets are narrow and the houses high, the upper stories being chiefly employed by the silk weavers at their looms. We left Lyons by the steam-boat at five, hoping to arrive at Nismes, or at least at Beaucaire, in the evening. We proceeded at a good speed down the rapid Rhone—the sun shone brightly, and we seemed going on to our hearts' content, when suddenly the vessel was stopped, and no one seemed able to guess the cause: we soon learned, however, that the captain considered it unsafe to proceed. This was about two in the afternoon, and we were hoping that three hours more would bring us to Beaucaire. A strong wind, which is prevalent at this time of the year, had sprung up from the north-east, and the difficulty of navigating the Rhone, arising from its numerous shoals, and the narrowness of some of the bridges, is very considerable; especially with such a boat as ours, which was more than four hundred feet long. The boat was therefore moored under the shelter of some perpendicular cliffs, three or four hundred feet high, and we found that we should not proceed till the next morning. We therefore took a walk on shore, and on our return settled ourselves for the night. The steam-boats on the Rhone are not adapted to the convenience of passengers; there were no berths, and many went on shore, and obtained lodgings in very crowded rooms: this was, however, a relief to us who remained on board. We reclined on the seats at the side of the cabin, where we passed a night which we shall be likely to remember. A large fire had been lighted, which rendered the heat unpleasant; this, however, went down in the night, and as the wind was so strong as

occasionally to burst open the cabin door, we had a copious supply of fresh, cold air; so that we could not easily keep ourselves warm till morning. At six o'clock I went on deck; but the wind was so strong and so cold, that I was glad of my great coat and plaid. I enjoyed the freshness of the air, however, and walked the deck for an hour or two. We started again at six, and were quite ready for a good breakfast at eight; but found, to our dismay, the steward's larder was almost exhausted. We had only taken a cup of coffee (*café noir*), with a piece of dry bread and some biscuit, since noon the previous day; and now we found there was no butter, no milk, no meat, no eggs,—nothing but coffee and bread. Finding afterwards, however, that he could furnish us with a little sausage, we did very well. After considerable detention at Avignon, we arrived safely at Beaucaire, just too late for the train to Nismes at noon. At Pont St. Esprit we passed under a stone bridge of twenty-six arches, supposed to be the longest in Europe, and, till 1810, the only bridge over the Rhone. Most of those that have since been built are 'suspension' bridges. Soon after leaving Avignon we passed under a very old wooden bridge which hardly allowed room for our paddle-boxes. The vine-covered hills and precipitous rocks, and the view of distant mountains under varied aspects, interested us much. My intelligent companions, by their knowledge of geology, astronomy, and botany, have contributed to the interest of the journey. We ascended a tower at Beaucaire, to get a good view of the country round, and took the next train to Nismes, where we arrived at about five, and were met by Jules Paradon, by whom, and the Friends here generally, we have been very kindly and cordially received.

"We find things here, as we expected, in a low state;

but there are some who are strongly attached to our religious principles, on whose behalf we are much interested, and feel that they have a strong claim on our sympathy. There were about forty persons present on First-day morning, and about thirty in the afternoon, including the four or five children of J. P.'s school. It appears, however, that generally only four or five attend the meeting regularly on First-day morning, in addition to J. and J. P.'s family, and that in the afternoon *reading* meeting at their house they are seldom joined by any others. We are desirous of doing what may be in our power to strengthen the things that remain. We have spent two days among them—First-day at Nismes and yesterday at St. Gilles; and I may acknowledge with thankfulness that 'Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.' On First-day morning we were engaged in a united exercise of mind, to which we were each (T. C., R. A. and myself) enabled to give expression. Jules is our interpreter; he proves fully equal to the service. In the afternoon T. C. and myself had again to address the company assembled, and before we separated I had to bend the knee, and approach the sacred footstool for them and for us. We afterwards visited two families, named Roux and Triall, and are likely to-day to call on the remaining families here. Yesterday we went to St. Gilles, about twelve miles distant, to a meeting at half-past ten, which proved a time of favour, wherein ability was afforded to each of us to labour among them. We dined with the family of Jacques Vally, with whom we were much interested, and had a time of retirement with them after dinner. T. C. and I went to see the widow Clavel, mother of Louis P. C. To her the language of sympathy and consolation flowed freely; she did not get to the meeting. I think our coming tended to renew her grief, and she is in a truly disconsolate state.

Louis was her only child; and, although once in good circumstances, she is now dependent on what she can earn by needlework, by which, I apprehend, she gains a scanty subsistence. We next paid a visit to one of those who never attend meetings, although nominally a member; he was the only one, it was thought, whom we should be able to see. We were glad we paid the visit; the old man knew Edward Brady and other Friends. We returned to the house of J. Vally, and, when about to separate, I became sensible of the overshadowing of divine love, under which strength was given to commend our dear friends here, with our own souls, into the divine hand, and to pray for a blessing upon them and upon ourselves. The feeling of solemnity continued, and R. A. quoted the words,—'La grace, la misericorde et le paix, soient avec vous, de Dieu notre Père, et du Seigneur Jesus Christ.' T. C. added a parting benediction; and we separated in all probability to meet no more in this world, but not without the hope of a re-union in a better state of being.

"*Two o'clock.*—We have been engaged since breakfast in four family visits, in each of which we have endeavoured to lay hold of the strength mercifully offered, each of us taking a full share of labour. Words have arisen, to my admiration, as we have proceeded from house to house, and in some instances neighbours and Friends were present, which may have added to what was required at our hands. It is a great favour that we are so united in our feelings in going from home to home. I am comforted in believing that many Friends at home are engaged to remember us and crave our preservation. May we keep near to him who is the Rock of our strength. This afternoon we are to visit Jules and Justine Paradon and their school, where we have invited all the young Friends of Nismes to meet us.

TO PETER BEDFORD.

"St. Hippolite, Fourth Month 15th, 1852.

"My dear Friend,

"Here we are in a south land, abounding with olives, mulberries, almonds, &c., with a beautiful clear sky over our heads, such as we never see in England; with the heat of summer in the day, and a delightful freshness and coolness in the air, both morning and evening, as thou wilt doubtless remember. I believe our present quarters (au Cheval Blanc) have been a resting-place for thee under similar circumstances, and that the efficient 'femme de chambre' of the masculine gender has waited upon thee. He has been here eighteen years, and is quite a character:—dost thou recollect him?

"It has been very striking and interesting to observe the gradual yet rapid alteration in the face of the country as we have journeyed from North to South, both in the character of the soil and the productions, as well as the progress of vegetation. At Paris the lime trees were just beginning to appear green. In journeying on, the vine, the almond (with white blossoms), and the plum and cherry trees in full bloom, gave evidence of our being in a south land; and here the roses and lilacs in blossom, and the pear and plum trees with the fruit set—apricots as large as walnuts,—and the general appearance of the country, form so great a contrast to that which we have left behind, as to make all the difference between the beginning of spring, as we usually have it, and the middle of summer.

"But thou wilt be more interested in hearing of other and more important things than those which relate to the face of nature. I may tell thee, then, that we have been

favoured hitherto with some little ability to labour unitedly according to our respective measures, though under a feeling of weakness and fear, being made very sensible that of ourselves we can do nothing."

"*Congenies, Fourth Month* 16*th.*—Thou wilt doubtless have heard, when this reaches thee, some little account of our proceedings up to Third-day afternoon, the 13th. We spent that evening at Jules and Justine Paradon's, having a sitting with the children and others who gave us their company; and after taking tea with them, we had an opportunity of conferring with them on the state of things in these parts, and had some conversation about the school. On Fourth-day morning we left Nismes early for Crespian, where Justine's sister resides, with her husband and large family of seven children. It seems the practice here when Friends come among them, to 'call together their kinsmen and near Friends;' and after we had refreshed ourselves by accepting of their hospitality, as the hour of noon approached, sundry arrangements were going forward, to provide for the accommodation of their neighbours, and we soon found ourselves in the company of about forty persons; so that our sitting with them assumed very much the character of a public meeting. We had afterwards a more select opportunity with the family. On our way from Crespian to St. Hippolite, we called upon an old Friend at Quissac (the only one living there); so that we did not reach St. Hippolite till it was nearly dark. We had a sitting that evening with Jean Paradon and his daughters, to our refreshment, and I hope to his comfort. His wife is very ill, and not likely to survive long. Yesterday morning we made some other calls, and left St. Hippolite about noon. I often feel very weak, and in a stripped condition; so that the language is ready to arise:

—'Oh that I had wings like a dove; for then would I fly away.' I long for more of the experience of the apostle, under which he was enabled to say:—'I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.' Nevertheless we have to acknowledge that we are not left to ourselves, but are favoured, from season to season, with a portion of strength according to the day.

"*Congenies, Fourth Month 17th.* [To his wife.]—Since coming to the South of France, we have had almost continually a cloudless sky, and the weather has been like our summer, till last evening, when, on retiring to our quarters, we enjoyed the delightful coolness and freshness of the evening air; the stars shone brilliantly, and there was no indication of an approaching change, except that I saw a single flash of lightning, which my companions thought was 100 miles distant: and now what a contrast! This morning the sky was overcast, the rain began to fall, and has continued to descend ever since, and at times in torrents, accompanied with thunder and lightning very near us. It proves very acceptable to the country, as people were beginning to fear the rainy season would again pass away without any fall, and the country was suffering much. Yesterday, as we went from house to house, we attracted the attention of the people, who sit out-of-doors at their work; and it was thought we should have a large meeting to-morrow, if the weather should prove favourable. I may say for myself, that my bread in a spiritual sense is administered as by weight, and my water by measure; yet I trust it is in such measure as is seen to be best for me by him who knoweth our frame, and remembereth that we are dust.

"*Second-day Morning.*—Yesterday proved a time of close exercise and much labour, and this morning the prevalent feeling of my mind was that of thankfulness to Him in whom we live, and move, and have our being. 'I was brought low, and he helped me.'—How often is this the experience of those who put their trust in him that is mighty, under the feeling of their own weakness and nothingness! At about seven, our friend Daniel Brun, from Fontanes, who had risen early, came to see us, and the time till meeting was chiefly occupied in conference with him. Many strangers attended the meeting. I should think about eighty persons were present; but our friends from a distance were prevented by the rain yesterday. We were each engaged in the ministry. It was mentioned at the close of the meeting that we intended to assemble again at five. The Two-months' Meeting then commenced its business, and we had a full opportunity of giving what advice we thought suitable, and of entering with them into a consideration of the state of the Society here. This occupied the time till two o'clock; we therefore adjourned till half-past three, when we proceeded with the answers to the queries. We had not finished when the time for the afternoon meeting arrived; a large number of persons came, and the meeting-house was filled; I suppose there may have been 120, besides some standing outside. We were each of us again engaged to labour among them, and the meeting concluded soon after six, when the Two-months' Meeting resumed its business. We had an open time among them in imparting such counsel as was presented to our minds, and the meeting separated, after solemn prayer, at about twenty minutes to eight. Two or three sittings this morning seemed to conclude our engagements here, and we took leave of our friends and proceeded to Codognan; from whence, having visited two families, we took the rail to Nismes.

"*Fourth Month* 20*th*.—Early this morning we examined the vast amphitheatre at Nismes, one of the finest Roman remains now existing. After this, having a few hours to spare, two of my companions and myself took the rail for Cette, in order to have the opportunity of seeing the Mediterranean. We stopped at Montpellier on the way, and had just time to go through the town to the Peyron, from whence we had an extensive and interesting view of the country. We arrived at Cette about noon, and were much interested in standing on the shores of the Great Sea, and admiring the intensely brilliant blueness of the water. We returned to Nismes in time to keep an appointment with J. and J. Paradon to take tea with us at our hotel. We spent an agreeable evening with them in social and religious intercourse.

"*Fourth Month* 22*nd*.—Leaving Nismes yesterday morning by diligence, we reached Valence at three this morning. Claude Ruel, from Annonay, met us here by appointment. He appears a very interesting character. He has become convinced of the principles of Friends, and mostly sits alone on First-day, but is sometimes joined by his wife. He informed us that many of his serious neighbours are desirous of becoming acquainted with the principles of Friends, and he is diligent in distributing Friends' books and tracts. He accompanied us to Pia Loux, the residence of B. Combe, who has also become convinced of our principles, and has a meeting at his house. We had a religious interview with the family, and some interesting conversation."

Travelling rapidly forward from Valence, they reached Paris on Seventh-day evening, the 24th. The following day they attended both meetings there, in the room hired by Friends for that purpose; but very few joined

them. On the 26th they examined the books and tracts, the property of the Society at Paris. They left at eight the next morning, and, having a favourable passage from Boulogne to Folkestone, John Sharp reached home about nine in the evening, in safety and peace.

CHAPTER XIII.

1852. ÆT. 40.

VISIT TO HIS RELATIVES—ILLNESS IN THE TOWN AND IN THE SCHOOL—SERIOUS INDISPOSITION OF HIS WIFE—HE IS ATTACKED WITH FEVER, UNDER WHICH HE RAPIDLY SINKS—HIS DECEASE—CONCLUSION.

THUS terminated this interesting visit to the South of France. We are now drawing near the closing scene. It might almost seem as though the desire to "be in earnest to do the day's work in the day-time," as recorded in his Journal, was, unknown to himself, in the course of accomplishment, in this act of dedication and love. We find the following record on the day after his return:—

"*Fourth Month* 28*th*.—It seemed pleasant to sit down again among 'my own people' at meeting. I think our hearts were united in admiration and thanksgiving to our Heavenly Father for his goodness and mercy towards us; and under this feeling, and in the belief that the spirit of prayer was mercifully spread over us, I had to express on the bended knee as follows:—Blessed be thou, O God of Israel, who only doest wondrous things; and blessed be thy glorious name for ever; and let the whole earth be filled with thy glory. Amen and amen. Thou art still graciously pleased, in condescending and marvellous mercy, to care for

thy poor, unworthy children; guiding them by thy counsel, preserving by thy power, and strengthening them with might by thy Spirit in their inner man. Enable all who are now before thee, who desire to fear thee, and to put their trust in thee, to magnify thy great name, and to celebrate thy praise. Accept, we pray thee, from these, under a sense of thy goodness and mercy towards them, both past and present, the tribute of thanksgiving, and enable them to commit the keeping of their souls to thee in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator.

"*Fifth Month 7th.*—Attended the Meeting for Sufferings, where our report was read; it appeared to give satisfaction and to excite feelings of interest on behalf of our fellow-professors in the South of France.

"*Fifth Month 28th.*—The Yearly Meeting is expected to close this evening. I have had the privilege of being present at all the sittings hitherto, and a more harmonious Yearly Meeting I do not remember to have attended. It has, indeed, been a season of favour, and fresh evidence has been abundantly afforded of the faithfulness of our God, and of his goodness towards us. I have felt desirous of walking more watchfully before him, and of striving from day to day to come up faithfully in the discharge of my various duties, as the head of this family, as a parent, as a husband, and last, though by no means least, as a member of the church of Christ, and a minister of the gospel. As I write these words, I feel an awful sense of the responsibility that attaches to me, in the belief, that, unworthy as I am, I may nevertheless regard myself as having had a dispensation of the gospel committed unto me. Humble me, yet more and more, O Lord, under a sense of my own unworthiness; and enable me to put on strength in thy name, even that strength which is made perfect in weakness."

During the vacation of this year, John Sharp and his wife attended the Ackworth General Meeting, and afterwards paid a visit to all their relatives in the North of England, at Bradford, Middlesbro', Carlisle, &c. It was little thought by any of them, or by himself at this time, that this visit would prove his last; but it was a peculiar satisfaction to his relatives afterwards that he had been able to accomplish it. The last week of the vacation was spent very pleasantly at Folkestone, with some of their children.

In a letter to a friend, on the 31st of Seventh Month, John Sharp thus writes :—

"We spent a pleasant week at Folkestone, and returned yesterday morning; it was quite a time of enjoyment.

"I am glad to find thou hast had a pleasant vacation, and I trust thou wilt be enabled to resume thy duties with cheerfulness and peace; but, inasmuch as the Christian's life is a continual warfare, it is well for us to expect to have to engage in a contest. Let not this, however, unduly discourage us, knowing that it is our privilege to have recourse to a spiritual armoury, where the weapons of our warfare are furnished according to our need; although it may at times require the utmost exercise of our faith to believe in their efficacy, or in our ability to wield them. With this exercise of faith, however, the sling and the stone are sometimes made efficacious to the overcoming of our soul's enemies. I write not as having attained, but as one who desires to be thy fellow-soldier in the army of the Lamb, yet often feels, beyond what pen or tongue can express, the fear which was entertained by the great apostle Paul, when he said—'Lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.'"

The school re-opened at the time arranged, and the family were favoured to assemble in usual health. But how entirely is the future hidden from mortal ken! A time of trial, of an almost unprecedented character in the annals of the Institution, was about to commence. In the course of the autumn, the town of Croydon was visited by an alarming and fatal epidemic, mostly assuming the form of malignant typhus fever. It would be difficult for any one not resident in the family to appreciate fully all the care and anxiety which, during this period, rested on the mind of the superintendent. The "pestilence walking in darkness, and the destruction wasting at noon-day," permitted to remove many valued and well-known inhabitants of the town,—its effects also extending to the family at the school, and several of the children more or less affected, —the very serious illness of his beloved partner, entirely prostrating her, and incapacitating from engaging in her ordinary duties,—all these circumstances, combined with the consequent great accession of care and responsibility, must have weighed very heavily upon him. But we will not anticipate. We will endeavour, as far as may be, to furnish a description of this trying period in his own words.

"*Eighth Month* 11*th*.—In our meeting this morning, our dear friend Mary Sterry dwelt on the desirableness of being brought to adopt the petition,—'Lord make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is, that I may know how frail I am;' and also on the duty to feel with and for those who are tried and afflicted, and to encourage those who suffer according to the will of God, to

commit the keeping of their souls to him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator. During the night, my dear H., who had been but poorly, was taken alarmingly ill.

"*Eighth Month* 22*nd*.—The fifteenth anniversary of our marriage. In meeting this morning, the text came to remembrance, (in connexion with the sudden removal of a dear friend),—'As for man, his days are as grass,' &c., which I was strengthened to revive; and to point out, in contrast with the brevity of life, and the uncertainty of earthly joys, the eternal duration of the mercy of God, and of the joys of heaven.

"*Ninth Month* 18*th*.—We have had some anxiety during the last few days on account of T. W., who has kept his bed in consequence of an attack of fever. He is now, through mercy, better, and appears recovering.

"*Tenth Month* 30*th*.—During the past week we have had several cases of fever, and yesterday H. S. was so ill, that one of the apprentices was despatched for her parents, who arrived at about eleven. The doctors were apprehensive that a part of one lung was consolidated, the result of inflammation of the chest, from which she has formerly suffered; from the impeded action of the lungs, congestion was feared, which would probably cause death. We are comforted this evening in observing some improvement, although she is still in a critical state. The other patients are going on well."

About a fortnight subsequently, great alarm was excited in consequence of the serious illness of two of the boys; one was threatened with congestion of the lungs, and the other was attacked with a succession of convulsions, accompanied by a state of entire uncon-

sciousness. These cases are alluded to in the following extract :—

" *Eleventh Month* 15*th.*—Last Third-day morning G. C. [then on a religious visit], had an interview with my dear H. and self; he told us his mind had been involved in much inward sorrow and mourning, although he had moved about among us with a cheerful countenance; and that in dwelling under it, he apprehended that it was owing to a feeling of sympathy with us under our present trial, expressing his belief that the Lord would be near, and having helped in six troubles, he would not forsake in the seventh, &c. In the course of the day, I told him I thought his sympathy for us might be by anticipation. On that night A. J. was taken alarmingly ill, and yesterday morning it seemed doubtful whether J. R. B. would live twenty-four hours. I desire to have these things in remembrance for my own instruction and encouragement. Last evening I addressed the children on the subject of J. R. B.'s illness; expressing the desire that the end designed by it might be answered, and commending this dear boy, in his present state of unconsciousness, to the prayers of those who are able to feel for him. 'Pray one for another.' 'In every thing, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God.'

" *Eleventh Month* 26*th.*—A day of heaviness. Owing to the illness of my dear wife, I have to bear a much larger share of the cares of this family, and, independently of this, my fears are awakened with reference to my precious and tenderly beloved partner, as it relates to the issue of her present disorder. I feel as if I could only pray to our Heavenly Father in the words of our divine Redeemer and holy Pattern, 'Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass

from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt.' The words were powerfully impressed on my mind not long ago, as they occurred in the family reading, 'The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?'—but I did not then apply it to myself: whether with reference to my dear partner's continuance it may be intended for me, I must leave.

"*Eleventh Month* 27*th.*—My dear H. has had a disturbed night. Early this morning she spoke to me with great calmness of the uncertainty of her continuance here; she thought the tide of life seemed ebbing; she felt much for our dear children, but more than all for me, feeling that our separation now would be a greater trial than at any previous period.

"The prospect to me seems awfully overwhelming: if consistent with thy blessed will, O Heavenly Father, be pleased to avert it.

"*Eleventh Month* 28*th.*—In the morning meeting I had to speak of the 'marvellous works' of the Lord, in his dealings with the children of men, under a variety of circumstances, and of the blessedness of being wholly given up to him."

This communication was nearly the last made by our dear friend in his own meeting, and, considering the very touching and trying circumstances in which he was then placed, the following digest, penned afterwards from memory by a friend who was present, will be perused with interest:—

"'Marvellous are thy works, O Lord!' was the exclamation of the Psalmist, after a consideration of the wonderful manner in which he had been created. 'I will praise thee;

for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.' I have been led to consider some of the wonders of the outward creation: 'They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters, these see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep. They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths: their soul is melted because of trouble. Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses. He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still. Then are they glad because they be quiet, so he bringeth them into their desired haven.' And they are brought to ask others to unite with them in the acknowledgment, 'Oh, that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men.'

"How instructive it is to reflect upon these wonderful works of the Almighty, whether in the widely extended universe, or in the smallest and most insignificant work of his creation, or in the beauty and harmony of his true church. A glimpse of this is at times permitted to those who are endeavouring to serve him, and very instructive it is to see the gifts which he is pleased to bestow on one and upon another.

"Various are the means by which he prepares those who are willing to serve him, for future usefulness in his church, at times bringing them very low, sometimes emptying the earthen vessel almost of its natural life. Sometimes he sees meet to lay his afflictive hand upon them; sometimes they see their nearest and dearest earthly ties prostrated on the bed of languishing; sometimes the things, the lawful things, which they have been permitted to enjoy, are altogether taken from them.

"In all such dispensations, what a comfort it is, notwithstanding our unfaithfulness and unworthiness, to be made

willing patiently to submit to them, and to say with sincerity, Thy kingdom come, thy will be done. The right submission to these refining operations will, through redeeming mercy, at last prepare the soul to unite with those who stand for ever round the throne, saying, 'Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are all thy ways, thou king of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name."

In the afternoon of this day, John Sharp remained from meeting, on account of the serious illness of another of the children, and that of his beloved wife. He says further:

"Mary Sterry and Peter Bedford took tea with us, and attended the evening reading. It was a solemn and favoured season. M. S. was engaged in lively, earnest prayer, that the Lord would be pleased to take this large and interesting family into his blessed care and keeping; that he would be near those on whom his chastening hand is now laid; and if they might not be permitted to experience a mitigation of their maladies, that they might be supported under them by the angel of the Lord's presence; she prayed for me, that I might be strengthened under the care and anxiety at present devolving upon me; and for my dear partner, that, in the Lord's time, she might be again raised up, and enabled to share the burden with me; and craved for the dear children that the truth might be indelibly sealed on their minds, that it is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man. P. B. was earnestly and affectionately engaged in addressing the children in a lively exhortation. I had also something to express before we separated, on the precious privilege of prayer. I desire ability to appropriate the

language of Thomas Scattergood, which I read this evening: 'O Lord, enable me to bind thy dispensations, proving and trying to uneasy flesh as they are, as jewels and chains about my neck.' Grant, O Lord, that the present trial may be instrumental in effecting thy blessed purposes respecting me, even in the purification and sanctification of my soul. Amen.

"*Eleventh Month* 29*th*.—Received kind and sympathizing letters from some of my dear relatives, which proved almost more than I could well bear. In the afternoon had a precious time of quiet with my dearest H.; we were enabled to commune together of the Lord's goodness to us, and mutually to open our minds as to our recent and present feelings under this dispensation. We both seem to have been led, independently of each other, to adopt the language,—'If it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt.'

"*Twelfth Month* 1*st*.—Shed a few tears before I left my bed this morning, to my relief. I am favoured to keep up pretty well in the presence of others."

Twelfth Month 4*th*.—After noticing the state of the invalids, J. S. writes:—"I have not been well for some days; but desire to be trustful, and commit my all to him who knows what we stand in need of, and what is best for us, and who is an all-sufficient Helper in times of need.

"*Twelfth Month* 12*th*.—Experienced some freedom in vocal prayer in our afternoon meeting, especially on behalf of those who were prevented by sickness from assembling with us."

This appears to be the last time that he attended meeting. On the 15th, he thus wrote to his daughter at York school, after alluding to her dear mother's illness:—

"There is one thing I would earnestly encourage thee to do. It is very sweet to look up to our Father in heaven, who knows what we stand in need of, and to pray to him for resignation to his holy will, and that his sustaining and comforting presence may be continued to one so near and dear to us. I may acknowledge, with gratitude and praise to him who hears and answers prayer, that I have found him to be a strong hold in this time of trouble, and to experience somewhat of the blessedness of those, who are enabled, through the assistance of his grace, to put their trust in him. May this, my beloved child, be thy experience,—increasingly so with increasing years,—and then thou wilt be enabled to bear the trials and afflictions of life, from which none are altogether exempt, with calmness and resignation, and to accept everything that comes in the divine appointment as the evidence of thy Heavenly Father's love."

Twelfth Month 16*th.*—After alluding to his dear wife's continued illness:—"It is sweet to see her thus supported. I do not quite entertain the same view that she does of immediate danger; but my feelings after an interview with her were very distressing, and, like Joseph, I went into my chamber and wept there."

In a letter under date Twelfth Month 16th, he says—

"I am still very anxious about one of the boys, although in some respects his symptoms have improved. I feel as if I had almost arrived at the climax as regards myself, but am favoured mostly to meet the family with some degree of cheerfulness."

Twelfth Month 17*th.*—Alluding to his wife, he says:—"This morning I found her again very low; she said, the words had been much with her,—'One shall be taken, and

the other left:' adding, the works of the Almighty are very wonderful; some are taken off in the vigour of life; others are allowed more time for preparation."

The next entry is the last in his Journal. After speaking of the visit of a physician who had been called in, he says:—

"I feel satisfied with having taken this step; although the conclusion to which I am now compelled to come,—that my dear wife's services in this Institution must no longer be performed by her,—is a very serious one, and may very materially affect my own position.

"But I desire ability to leave this to him who has hitherto abundantly blessed and cared for us. He can open a way where at present I see none.

> "From human eyes 'tis better to conceal,
> Much that I suffer—much I hourly feel;
> But oh! the thought does tranquillize and heal,
> All—all—is known to Thee."

Thus was the future, no doubt wisely, hidden. While desiring to live in a constant state of preparation for the last summons, how little he probably thought that summons was so near!

We gladly avail ourselves of an account of the few remaining days, and of the closing scene, drawn up by his beloved brother, who was with him to the last.

In a letter under date Twelfth Month 20th, he wrote:—

"I have had much anxiety during the last few days, respecting some of the boys. The cases of fever in Croydon

increased considerably yesterday. Jane Peers, a young Friend, is to be interred on the 22nd."

On the 23rd he wrote to a Friend:—

"I have found it almost impossible in the recent unprecedented time of trial and mental pressure from various causes, to attend even to necessary correspondence.

"Fever has been very prevalent in Croydon, and we have had a constant succession of cases, some of them very severe; though, happily, never many at once. One of the boys was suspended as between life and death for about a week or ten days: he is still very low; but, I hope, in a fair way of recovery.

"This is our Monthly Meeting at Wandsworth; but I scarcely leave the house for ten minutes for anything, except to go to meeting, and have frequently had to forego that privilege."

On the 24th he wrote:—

"I think I may report a little improvement in my dear Hannah's health during the past week; she has been brought very low; but, through all she has been sweetly supported and resigned. We have had several cases of severe illness, so that it has been to me a protracted season of intense anxiety; but so far, through mercy, all have been favoured to recover."

On the 27th of Twelfth Month he dictated as follows:—

"Last Seventh-day evening, the 25th, I found myself obliged to take to my bed from exhaustion and headache. Yesterday my dearest Hannah was not so well, and, being confined to my bed, I was obliged to pass the day without

seeing her. To-day we have both been a little better, and I have spent a few hours with her in the committee-room. As to myself, I hope in a few days to be nicely recruited. We have no particular cause for anxiety among the children now, the last having been taken home last Seventh-day.

"On Third-day, the 28th, he suffered from violent headache.

"On Sixth-day, the 31st [continues his brother] I reached Croydon, early in the morning, and found the intense pain in the head had considerably abated. On First-day night, the 2nd of First Month 1853, the exhaustion was very great, and the life of my beloved brother was just sustained by the closest watching. During this period of intense and thoughtful care, a measure of confiding trust was mercifully experienced, and the language arose with much freshness, as a mental salutation, distinct and clear:—'What if I take him home? Am I not a Father of the fatherless, and the widow's Friend?'"

From a letter dated First Month 3rd, addressed to M. H. S., then at York School:—

"My night and day watching beside thy beloved father, forbid my spending many minutes in letter-writing; but thy claim, my dear child, is first on the list. We are still extremely thoughtful respecting the issue of thy father's illness, and the doctor here thinks the case so serious, as to suggest that a physician from London be sent for, and this we hope may be accomplished to-day. Thy dear mother bears up wonderfully, considering her invalid state; she said this morning that she must prepare for the worst. This was after the third visit of the doctor since midnight, when he gave us to understand there was little room for hope. My brother was better yesterday, till about seven in the evening, when his breathing became affected, and his

pulse very weak and low. After that he rallied considerably, but did not show any symptom of continued permanent improvement.

"I was very much alarmed in the night, and sent for the doctor, who very kindly came and prescribed; but the night was to me one of intense thought and feeling, incessantly occupied in endeavouring to stem the disease and prostration consequent thereon. I believe I may say my dear brother was kept alive through the night by restoratives administered more than thirty times. Nothing now remains but to endeavour to do our best, and leave the event in the merciful disposal of an all-wise and gracious Creator. We shall, I hope, keep thee fully informed from day to day. I feel tenderly for thee, my dear niece;—our loss will be great if thy father is taken."

Extract from a letter bearing date First Month 5th, 1853:—

"I write an hour after midnight on Fourth-day morning, beside the bed of our dear brother, whose case continues to be extremely critical. Three times he has been as if at the point of death; twice from exhaustion and lowered action of the heart, and once from apoplexy, under which last affecting visitation he was entirely given up by his medical attendants. Every known means was, however, called into action on his behalf, and, in the afternoon, the livid appearance characteristic of the disease had considerably abated, and at times he was quite in a state of consciousness. Towards evening he appeared comparatively easy, but the breathing was laborious, and this continued through the night.

"After midnight, from hour to hour, there was very little pulse perceptible. Early on Fourth-day morning, the

5th of First Month, he appeared weak and sunk. Ether and ammonia served to rally awhile, but a further reduction of strength ensued. About half-past three he said distinctly, 'The bereaved ones—the bereaved ones;' and about something addressed to them which I could not quite gather. Between three and four, he was quite collected for a short time, during which I enquired, Did he feel peaceful? and he replied with emphasis, 'Oh yes!' Early morning appears to be the trying time, from about one o'clock to five; the exhaustion then requires watching almost minute by minute, and restoratives are administered alternately with food, as the urgency of the case may require.

"On Fourth-day I dined in my dear sister's room; she looked pale, but remarkably calm, having made up her mind as to the result, should it please Divine Providence to call her beloved husband home. The doctor called early on Fourth-day morning; but, although the symptoms appeared far more for life than death, he could say nothing at present as to the ultimate issue of the complaint. The life of our beloved brother appeared still to hang as by a single thread, and even that thread worn thin in many places; still life was there, and hope revived. The death-like symptoms were suspended, and the natural colour and general appearance of the skin were much restored; for a time he lay quiet and was entirely conscious, in which state he smiled, and spoke to dear Peter Bedford and to his sister; but later in the afternoon a change took place for the worse; the pulse reached 140, and through the night there was almost constant delirium.

"On entering his room about seven the following morning, the 6th of First Month, he looked up and called me by name. About half-past eight, the nurses were at

breakfast, and I sat watching by him alone. The breathing became more laboured: I gave a dose of ether — then another; and after sponging his head and feet, he became more quiet. I then read the twenty-third Psalm aloud; he remained quite still—how far conscious is doubtful. Soon after this, he was threatened with suffocation: I got him on to his side, rang the bell for assistance, and he was relieved by the discharge of phlegm; still there was a struggle for breath as the air-passages became clogged. After this, he lay for a short time with his head resting on my hand, and in this position passed very gently away, without sigh or struggle; and again the language arose, and the feeling with which it first presented, 'What if I take him home?'

"During the illness of this beloved one, there was often very present with me the consoling assurance, that while we were caring for the mortal part, through the mercy of our God in Jesus, and in his holy keeping, the immortal part was safe for evermore. My beloved widowed sister was preserved in great calmness, and was enabled, with confiding trust, to say, 'I could not wish him back again.'

"The remains were interred at Croydon, with much attendant solemnity, on First-day, the 9th of First Month, 1853."

Thus was our beloved, devoted, and dedicated friend taken, as in the strength and brightness of his days. To human eyes it seemed as though years of usefulness might have been before him, and as though he were never better fitted for the service of his Lord. Whilst we cannot comprehend all the dispensations permitted by Infinite Wisdom, let it be ours, in the exercise of our faith, to subscribe to the undoubted truth, that while

"the Lord giveth no account of any of his matters," "he doeth all things well."

It will be needless here to dwell on those points of excellence in John Sharp's character which an attentive perusal of the foregoing pages will not fail to indicate. As evidences of the work of divine grace in the soul,—that grace which came by Jesus Christ,—these may and ought to prove incentives and encouragements to survivors to "walk by the same rule, and to mind the same thing." It would be difficult to estimate the amount of patient and anxious care which many who survive have received at his hands. May these, under all their varied circumstances, fully realize the fact, that, though it may be in a different line of service and dedication, they also have a part and a lot to fulfil in life; that, however lowly some may feel their position to be, a faithful and steady performance of their duty, in humble reliance on divine guidance and strength, is required at their hands. Constantly remembering that this life should be viewed as a time of preparation for an eternal existence of a far higher and more exalted nature, and fervently desiring, under a heart-felt sense of redeeming love and mercy, to be living, not unto themselves, but unto him who died for them and rose again, may they be blessed of the Lord, and become a blessing to those around them; filling up their measure of earthly service, and ripening and preparing for their heavenly home. Thus may they in the end, through adorable mercy, be ready for that last summons, which shall call them to leave the things of time, and shall re-unite them to many

beloved ones in those blest abodes, where, in the glorious companionship of saints and angels, and of the spirits of the just made perfect, their voices shall swell the song of praise for ever ascending before the eternal throne.

EXTRACTS

FROM

"LINES FOR THE OPENING YEAR," 1853.

THESE Lines were written by a young Friend, on the occasion of the alarming illness that prevailed at the time of John Sharp's removal. As both his decease and that of some others mentioned in these pages are here noticed, it is thought they will possess some interest to the readers of the Memoir.

ROUSE thee, my lyre, and give the new-born year
Its greeting due. The muse doth love to note
The seasons' changeful circuit. Morn and even,
The year's departure and its birth, to her,
As to the bard of old, are sacred still.
Then wherefore with their wonted melody
Wake not the punctual chords? Ah! hapless lyre,
To joy attuned so long—far other theme awaits
Thee now. The infant year hath brought
Affliction on its wings; and whoso writes
Its annals, well may stain the page with tears.

Hark! the death angel's footstep! Lo, he waves
His gleaming sword above our sunny homes,

From house to house, with swift advance and sure,
Choosing his victims. First in the fresh prime
Of budding womanhood ; a blooming girl.*
Life's spring just merging into summer, filled
Her heart with hope. How brightly rose that morn,—
Her one-and-twentieth birthday ! How replete
With fond maternal pride her mother's heart !
But the death-angel passed—his arrow sped
Unerring ! From that day the maiden drooped !
* * * * *

Now quailed the stoutest heart
For nearer yet the pale Destroyer came,
And stayed his steed before our stateliest hall,
And sent his summons to the dearest there.

O thou beloved ! † 'tis not in verse of mine
To paint the sudden anguish of that hour
When first we learned the Spoiler's hand had set
His mark on *thee*. Then tears flowed forth like rain,
And hearts were bowed in agonizing prayer ;
And youthful cheeks grew pale, and youthful feet
Forsook their pastimes, as the tidings spread.

Twelve days he languished, scorched by the hot breath
Of the fierce fever ; for the strife is hard
'Twixt the strong man and death. His brother heard,
Nor staid a second call. With wingèd speed
He sought the sufferer's couch, and o'er him hung,
By day, by night, untiring. Then was shown
How that 'a brother for adversity
Is born.' With woman's skill and tenderness
Those faithful hands the dying pillow smoothed,
Performing well *her* part, whom sickness sore
Forbade to succour. To its slenderest thread
The loosening cord was worn ; and hour by hour,
'Twixt smiles and tears, we listened in suspense,

* Jane Peers. † John Sharp.

To hope still fondly clinging, if perhaps
The stroke might yet be spared. But ready now
The shining convoy, 'on the other side,'
Beckoning appeared; nor e'en a brother's love
Might longer hold the ransomed spirit back.

So passed he from us, without one farewell!
No parting blessing to his little ones—
No message to the partner of his heart.
Gone—in the strength and vigour of his days
In manhood's flower—in duty's mid career—
Gone! as some stately oak, beneath whose shade
The tenants of the forest slept secure;
Amidst whose spreading boughs the fowls of heaven
Had made their dwellings; round whose massy trunk
The clasping ivy clung; and at whose feet
Bloomed many a tender flower—as such a tree,
By tempest's force uprooted in a night,
Tears the frail ivy, crushes down the flowers,
Makes silence in the forest, scattering far
The tribes it sheltered—thus untimely fallen,
When needed most, in stormiest hour, art thou.

Nor long survived the gentle youth,* whose race,
Though brief, was by thy side, whose goal, we trust,
Like thine is won; whose grave is next to thine.
* * * * * *
Praise, midst our deepest grief, high praise for this!
And for the stricken-hearted mourners, prayer!
That now at length, a Father's voice may say
To the dread Angel, 'Tis enough! withdraw
Thine hand!' and bid the avenging sword return
Unto its scabbard! That the Comforter
In pitying love descending, from his wings
Would shed the dews of healing. And for all
To whom this lesson hath proclaimed
The Almighty's power, that none may turn away

* W. H. Pierce, one of the apprentices at the school, who died of fever, 14th of First Month, 1853.

Unawed, unsoftened. We have lived too long
In fancied, fond security, as if
Death might not touch our treasures. Never more
Let us presume on life, within whose streets
The midnight pestilence—the noonday scourge
Have done their mission ; lest, returning soon,
They haply summon first, the least prepared.
Said I the dirge was closed ? I did not hear
(So noiselessly it glanced) the shaft that fell,
E'en while I sang. Another honoured name*
Claims such sad tribute as the Muse can pay ;
Yet poor her eloquence, thy worth to tell,—
And small the need ; embalmed in every heart
Shall be thy memory—all in thee have lost
A friend, but chief the afflicted— the bereaved,
The sick, the dying—soother thou in turn
Of each. How softly on the drooping heart
Fell the loved tones of that familiar voice,
For which we listen yet ; how sweet that smile
After brief absence, greeting each return
To home and friends ; that tender parting kiss
And benediction warm, on my flushed cheek
Impressed so oft—for the last time impressed,
Alas ! how recently ! But wherefore thus
Prolong the mournful numbers ? Tears impede
The impassioned utterance. Precious one ! Farewell !
What though unheralded the message came !
Thy course was finished, and there needed not
Words to confirm the truths, thy life had taught.

* Mary Sterry.

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